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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE following paper is the substance of Baxter's retrospective view of his religious opinions in early life, contrasted with the sentiments of his maturer years. The original may be found at the close of the first part of the first book of his posthumous work, entitled *Reliquiæ Baxterianæ*, or the Life and Times of Richard Baxter, published by Matthew Sylvester, 1696.

R.

'When I peruse the writings of my younger years, I find the footsteps of an unfurnished mind, of emptiness, and insufficiency; yet, of those points which I then thoroughly studied, my judgment is the same now as then, and therefore in the substance of my religion, and in such controversies as I then searched into with some extraordinary diligence, I find not my mind disposed to change. But in divers points that I studied slightly, and in many things which I took upon trust from others, I have since found my apprehensions either erroneous or very defective: and those things which I was orthodox in, I had either insufficient reasons for, or a mixture of some sound and some insufficient ones; or else an insufficient apprehension of those reasons; so that I scarcely knew what I seemed to know: and one common infirmity I perceive in my writings, namely, that I put forth matters with some kind of confidence, as if I had done something new or more than ordinary in them, when, upon my mature review, I find that I said not one half which the subject re-

quired: and the reason was, that I had not read any of the fuller sort of books that are written on the points I treated of, nor conversed with those that knew more than myself; and so all those things were either new or great to me, which were common, and perhaps small, to others: and, because they all came in by my own study of the naked matter, and not from books, they were apt to affect my mind the more, and to seem greater than they were. And another token of weakness is discernible in my early works, namely, that I was very apt to start controversies in my practical writings, and also more desirous to acquaint the world with all I took to be truth, and to assault those books by name which I thought unsound: and the reason of all this was, that I was then in the vigour of my youthful apprehensions, and the new appearance of any sacred truth was more apt to affect me, and to be more valued, than afterwards, when commonness had dulled my delight; and I did not then sufficiently discern how much of controversy is verbal, and upon mutual mistakes. And withal I knew not how impatient divines were of being contradicted; and how it would stir up all their power to defend what they had once said, and rise against the truth which is thus thrust upon them, as the mortal enemy of their honour: and I have perceived that nothing so much hindereth the reception of the truth, as urging it on men with too harsh importunity, and falling too heavily upon their errors; for hereby you engage their credit in the business, and they defend their errors as themselves. In

controversies, it is opposition which kindles a resisting zeal; whereas, if they be neglected, and their opinions lie awhile neglected, they usually cool and come again to themselves: though this holds not when a sectary is animated by the greediness and increase of his followers. Men are so loth to be drenched with the truth, that I am more for going that way to work; and, to confess the truth, am lately much prone to the contrary extreme, so as to be too indifferent what men hold, and to keep my judgment to myself; and I find this effect is mixed according to its causes, which are some good and some bad; the bad ones are, 1. An impatience of men's weakness and mistaking forwardness and self-conceit: 2. An abatement of my sensible esteem of truth, through the long abode of it on my mind. The better causes are, 1. That I am more sensible than ever of the necessity of living upon the principles of religion which we are all agreed in, and uniting these; and how much mischief men that over-value their own opinions have done the church; how some have destroyed charity, and others caused schism, and most have hindered serious godliness in themselves and others, and used controversy to divert men from seriously following a holy life. 2. And I find that it is much more for most men's good, to converse with them only in that way of godliness where all are agreed, and not touching upon differences to stir up their corruptions; and to tell them of little more of your knowledge than you find them willing to receive from you as mere learners; and therefore to stay till they *crave* information of you; as Musculus did with the anabaptists, when he visited them in prison, conversing kindly with them, and shewing them all the love he could, and never talking about their opinions, till at last, they, who used to call him a deceiver, entreated him to teach them, and received his instruction. We mistake men's diseases when we think

there needs nothing to cure their errors, but only to bring them the evidence of truth. Alas! there are many distempers of mind to be removed, before men are able to receive that evidence. In a learning way men are ready to receive truth, but in a disputing way they come armed against it with prejudice and animosity. In my youth I was quickly past my fundamentals, and greatly delighted with metaphysics (though my preaching was still on the necessary points); but the older I grew, the smaller stress I laid upon matters of controversy, as finding far greater uncertainties in them than I at first saw; and now it is the plain doctrines of the Catechism which I most value, and daily think of, and find most useful to myself and others. The Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, do find me now the most plentiful and acceptable matter for all my meditations: they are to me as my daily bread; and as I can speak and write of them over and over again, so I had rather hear or read of them, than of any of the school niceties, which once so much pleased me. And thus I observed it was with old Bishop *Usher*, and with many others; and I conjecture that this effect also is mixed of good and bad according to its causes. The *bad* cause may perhaps be some natural infirmity. As trees in the spring shoot vigorously, but in autumn the life retires to the root; so possibly, my nature, conscious of its infirmity, may find itself insufficient for great things, and so my mind may descend to the root of Christian principles: and also I have often been afraid lest *ill-rooting* at first, and many temptations afterwards, have made it more necessary for me than many others to secure my fundamentals. But upon much observation, I am afraid lest most others are in no better a case; and that at first they take it for granted that Christ is the Saviour of the world, that the soul is immortal, and that there is a heaven and a hell, &c. while they are studying

abundance of scholastic superstructures, and at last will find cause to study more soundly their religion itself, as well as I have done. The better causes are these: 1. I value all things according to their use and end; and I find by my daily experience, that the knowledge of God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and of a holy life, is of more use than all speculation. 2. I know that every man must grow (as trees) downwards and upwards at once; and that the roots increase as the trunk and branches do. 3. Being the nearer eternity, I the more regard those things which my everlasting life or death depends on. 4. Having most to do with ignorant, miserable people, I am commanded, by my charity and reason, to treat with them of that which their salvation lieth on, and not to dispute with them of niceties, when the question is presently to be determined, whether they shall dwell for ever in heaven or in hell. In a word, my meditations must be upon the matters of my interest; and as the seeking after eternal life is the matter of my interest, so must it be of my meditation. That is the best study which makes men better, and tends to make them happy. I abhor the folly of those unlearned persons, who revile learning because they know not what it is; and I take not any piece of true learning to be useless; and yet my soul approves the resolution of St. Paul, who determined to know nothing among his hearers (that is, comparatively to value and exhibit no other wisdom) but Christ crucified. I would persuade my reader to live upon the essential doctrines of Christianity; and that he may know that my testimony is somewhat regardable, I presume to say, that in this I gain-say my natural inclination to subtilty; and I think that if he lived among infidels, he would find that to make good the doctrine of faith and life eternal, were not only his most useful study, but also that which would require the exercise of

all his parts, and the utmost of his diligence to manage it skilfully. I add therefore, that whereas in my younger days I was never tempted to doubt the truth of the Scripture, but all my fear was exercised at home, about my own sincerity, and this was it which I called unbelief; since that time my worst assaults have been on the other side; and such they were, that had I been void of inward experience, and had I not discerned more reason for my religion than I did before, I had certainly apostatised to infidelity. I am now, therefore, much more apprehensive of the necessity of well grounding men in their religion, and especially of the witness of the in-dwelling Spirit; for I more sensibly perceive that the Spirit is the great witness of Christ in the world. And though the folly of fanatics tempted me long to overlook the strength of this testimony of the Spirit, while they placed it in a certain *internal assertion*, or enthusiastic inspiration, yet I now see that the Holy Ghost in another manner is the witness of Christ, and his agent in the world. The Spirit, by the sanctification and consolation assimilating the soul to Christ, is the continued witness to all true believers. There is many a one that hideth his temptations to infidelity, because he thinketh it a shame to open them, and because it may create doubts in others; but I fear the imperfection of most men's care of their salvation, and of their diligence in a holy life, comes from the imperfection of their belief in a life to come. For my part I must confess, that when my belief of things eternal is most clear, all goeth accordingly in my soul; and all temptations to sinful compliances with the world and flesh signify worse to me than an invitation to the stocks or Bedlam: and no petition seems more necessary to me than, "Lord, I believe; help thou my unbelief."

In my younger years my trouble for sin was most about my actual

failings in thought, word, and action; except hardness of heart, of which more hereafter. But now I am much more troubled for inward defects, and omission or want of the vital duties or graces in the soul. My daily trouble is so much for my ignorance of God, want of love to him, and strangeness to the life to come, and for want of greater willingness to die, and longing to be in heaven, that I take not some immoralities, though very great, to be in themselves so great and odious sins, if they could be found separate from these. Had I all the world, how gladly would I give it for a fuller knowledge and belief and love of God. Once I placed much of my religion in tenderness of heart, and sorrow for sin, and less of it in the study of the love of God, and in his praises, than I now do. I was little sensible of the greatness and excellency of love and praise, though I coldly spake the same words in its commendation which I now do. And now I am less troubled for want of grief and tears, (though I more value humility, and refuse not needful humiliation:) but my conscience now looketh at love of and delight in God, and praising him, as the height of my religious duties, for which it is that I value and use the rest. My judgment is more for frequent and serious meditation on the heavenly state than it was once. I then thought that a sermon on the attributes of God and the joys above was not the most excellent; and used to say, everybody knows that God is great, and heaven a blessed place; I had rather hear how I may attain it. And nothing pleased me so well as the doctrine of regeneration, and the marks of sincerity; which indeed was suitable to me in that state; but now I had rather meditate, hear, and read, on God and heaven, than on any other subject. For I perceive that it is the object that alters and elevates the mind, which will be as that is on which it habitually feeds; and that it is not only to our

comfort to be much in heaven in our thoughts, but that it must animate all other duties, and fortify us against all temptations, and that a man is no more a Christian than he is heavenly. I was once wont to meditate most on my own heart, and look little higher; but now, though I am greatly convinced of the necessity of heart-acquaintance yet I see more need of a higher work, and that I should look oftener upon Christ and heaven, than upon my own heart. At home I find distempers to trouble me, and some evidences of my peace: but it is above I must find matter of delight. I would, therefore, have one thought upon myself, and many on beatifying objects. — Formerly, I knew much less than now; and yet was not half so much acquainted with my ignorance. I had great delight in the daily new discoveries which I made, but I knew little either how imperfectly I understood those very points, whose discovery so much delighted me, nor how much might be said against them, nor to how many things I was yet a stranger. But now I find far greater darkness upon all things; and perceive how very little it is that we know in comparison of that which we know not; and I have far meaner thoughts of my own understanding; though I must needs know that it is better furnished than it was then. Accordingly, I had once a higher opinion of learned persons and books than I have now; and what I wanted myself, I thought every reverend divine had attained, and was familiarly acquainted with; and what books I understood not by reason of the strangeness of the terms or matter, I the more admired, and thought that others understood their worth. But experience has constrained me against my will to know, that learned men are imperfect, and know but little as well as I; especially those that think themselves the wisest. And the more I am acquainted with them, the more I perceive that we are all yet in the

dark; and the more I am acquainted with holy men, that are all for heaven, and pretend not to subtilties, the more I value and honour them. And when I have studied hard to understand some abstruse book, I have but attained the knowledge of human imperfection, and to see that the author is but a man as well as I. At first I took more upon my author's credit, than now I can do; and when an author was highly commended to me by others, or pleased me in some part, I was ready to entertain the whole; whereas now I take and leave in the same author, and dissent from him whom I like best, as well as from others. At first I much inclined to go with the highest in controversy, on one side or other; but now I can so easily see what to say against both extremes, that I am far more disposed to reconciling principles. And whereas I once thought conciliators were but ignorant men, that were willing to please all, and would pretend to reconcile the world by principles which they themselves understood not, I have since perceived that even if the loveliness of peace had no hand in the business, yet greater light and judgment usually is with the reconciler, than with either of the contending parties; though I know that moderation may be a pretext of error.

I now see more good, and more evil, in all men, than I once did. I see that good men are not so good, as I formerly thought they were, but have more imperfections, and that nearer approach and fuller trial make the best appear more weak and faulty, than their admirers at a distance think. And I find that few are so bad, as either their malicious enemies, or censorious separating professors, imagine. In some I find that human nature is corrupted into a greater likeness to devils, than I thought once any on earth had been. But even in the wicked, there is usually more for grace to make advantage of, and more to testify for God, than once I believed

there had been. I less admire gifts of utterance, and bare profession of religion, than I once did; and have much more charity for many, who by the want of gifts make an obscurer profession than they. I once thought that almost all who could pray movingly and fluently, and talk well of religion, had been saints. But experience has opened to me, that odious crimes may consist with high profession; and I have met with many obscure persons, not noted for any extraordinary profession, or forwardness in religion, but only living a quiet, blameless life; whom I have after found to have long lived, as far as I could discern, a truly sanctified life; only their prayers and duties were by accident kept secret from other men's observation. Yet he that upon this pretence would confound godly and ungodly, may as well go about to lay heaven and hell together. I am not so narrow in my special love as heretofore; and being less censorious, and taking more than I did for saints, it must needs follow that I love more *as* saints than I did formerly. I think it not lawful to put that man off with bare church communion, and such common love which I must allow the wicked, who professeth himself a true Christian by such a profession as I cannot disprove. I am not too narrow in my principles of church communion as once I was. I more plainly perceive the difference between the church visible, and mystical; between sincerity and profession; and that a credible profession is a proof sufficient of a man's title to church admission. I am not for narrowing the church more than Christ himself allows us; nor for robbing him of any of his flock. I am more sensible how much it is the will of Christ that every man be the chooser or the refuser of his own felicity, and that it lieth most on his own hands whether he will have communion with the church or not; and that, if he be a hypocrite, it is himself that will bear the loss. Yet am I more ap-

prehensive than ever of the great need of ecclesiastical discipline, and what a sin it is to make no distinction but by bare names and sacraments; and what a great dishonour it is to Christ, when the church shall be as vicious as the assemblies of pagans, and shall only differ from them in ceremony and name. I am more sensible of the evil of schism, and of a separating humour; for the effects have shewn us more of the mischiefs. I am far more sensible how prone many young professors are to spiritual pride, self-conceit, and unruliness; and so proving the grief of their teachers, and firebrands in the church: and how much of a minister's work lieth in preventing this, and humbling and confirming such young unexperienced professors, and keeping them in order in their religious progress. Yet am I more sensible of the sin of using men cruelly in matters of religion. Such as are guilty of this know not their own infirmity, nor the nature of pastoral government, which ought to be paternal, and by love.

My soul is much more afflicted with the thoughts of this miserable world, and more drawn out in a desire for its conversion, than heretofore. I was wont to look little farther than England in my prayers; but now I better understand the case of mankind, and the method of the Lord's Prayer. No part of my prayers is so deeply serious as that for the conversion of the infidel and ungodly world. Yet am I not so much inclined to pass a peremptory sentence of damnation upon all that never heard of Christ; having more reason than I knew of before, to think that God's dealing with such is much unknown to us; and that the ungodly here among us Christians are in far worse case than they. My censures of the papists much differ from what they were at first. I then thought that their errors in doctrine were their most dangerous mistakes. But I am now assured that their misexpressions and misunderstanding us, with our

mistaking of them, and inconveniently stating our own opinions, hath made the differences in controversial points to seem much greater than they are; and that in some it is next to none at all. But the great and irreconcilable differences lie in their church tyranny and usurpations, in their corruption and desecration of God's worship, together with their befriending ignorance and vice. At first I thought that it had been proved that a papist cannot go beyond a reprobate; but now I doubt not but that God has many sanctified ones among them, who have received Christianity so practically, that their contradictory errors prevail not against them to hinder their salvation; but that their errors are like a conquerable draught of poison which nature doth overcome. I can never believe that a man may not be saved by that religion which brings him to a heavenly mind and life; nor that God will ever cast a soul into hell that truly loves him. Nor, as once, does it condemn any doctrine with me to hear it called popish; for I have learned to dislike men for bad doctrine, rather than the doctrine for the men; and to know that even Satan can use the name of Antichrist against truth.

I am more deeply afflicted for the dissensions of Christians than when I was a younger Christian. Yet am I farther than ever I was from expecting great matters of unity, splendour, or prosperity, to the church on earth; or that saints should dream of a kingdom of this world, or flatter themselves with the hopes of a golden age; till their be 'a new heaven and a new earth.' And on the contrary I am more apprehensive that suffering must be the church's most ordinary lot; and Christians indeed must be self-denying cross-bearers, even when there are none but formal nominal Christians to be the cross-makers. And though ordinarily God would have vicissitudes of summer and winter, that the church may grow exten-

sively in the summer of prosperity and radically in the winter of adversity; yet usually its night is longer than its day; and the day itself has its tempests. For, 1. The church will be still imperfect, and its diseases need this bitter remedy. 2. Rich men will be rulers of this world, and they will be generally far from true godliness, that they may reach heaven by human impossibilities, as a camel goes through a needle's eye. 3. The ungodly will ever hate the image of God; and brotherhood will not keep a Cain from killing an Abel who offers a more acceptable sacrifice than himself; and the guilty will still hate the light, and make a prey to their pride and malice of their conscientious reprovers. 4. Many pastors will be troubling the church with their pride, and avarice, and contentiousness; and the worst will be seeking to be the greatest, and they that seek it are likeliest to attain it. 5. Those that are truly judicious will still be comparatively few; and consequently, the troublemakers and dividers will be the multitude; and a judicious reconciler will be disliked by both extremes. 6. The tenor of the Gospel is fitted to people in a suffering state; 7. And the graces of God in a believer are mostly suited to such a state. 8. Christians must imitate Christ, and suffer with him before they reign with him. 9. Observation of God's dealing hitherto with his church in all ages confirms me, and the disappointment of such as have dreamed of glorious times. It was such dreams as infatuated, among others, our English fanatics, who seemed determined to set up Christ in his kingdom whether he would or not. Many of the German protestants once expected the golden age; but in a very short time, either the death of some of their princely supporters, or war, or back-slidings, exposed all their expectations to scorn, and laid them lower than before.

I do not lay so great stress upon

the external modes of religion, as many young professors do. I have suspected, that this is from a cooling of my former zeal; but I find that judgment and charity are the causes of it, as far as I can discover. I cannot be so narrow in my principles of church communion as many are, who are, for instance, so much for a liturgy, or so much against it, that they can agree with no church that is not of their mind.—I am less regardless of the approbation of man, and set much lighter by contempt or applause, than I did once. I am oft suspicious that this is not only from the increase of self-denial and humility, but partly from my being surfeited with human applause; and all worldly things appear most unsatisfactory when we have tried them most. But though I feel that this has some hand in the effect, yet, as far as I can perceive, the knowledge of man's nothingness, and God's transcendent greatness, with whom it is that I have most to do, and the sense of the brevity of human things, and the nearness of eternity, are the principal causes of this effect; which some have imputed to self-conceit and moroseness.

(To be continued.)

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

It has often been urged, that the pronoun *THAT*, in Ephes. ii. 8*, cannot refer to the word *FAITH*, as its antecedent, because the corresponding Greek pronoun is of the neuter gender, whereas the word rendered *faith* is feminine. I own, that, considering some very common grammatical principles, I could never allow much force to this argument. But I have lately met with an authority upon the subject, which will be admitted to be great, and which I will beg you to lay before your readers; only

* "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that (*διὰ τῆς πίστεως* καὶ τὸτο, &c.) not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

premising, that the rule is laid down by the writers from whom I quote it, without any reference to the disputed passage to which I propose to apply it.

In Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, Lib. I. c. iv. (p. 54, *Edit. Schneider, Lipsie*, 1790) the neuter pronoun *ταυτα* is referred to the feminine noun *ἡδονας*: on which passage the following remark is made by *Ernestus*, and repeated from him by *Zeunius*, the well known editor of *Viger's Idioms—Attici LIBENTER post feminina, neutra ponunt, UT A MULTIS EST NOTATUM.*

I am, &c.

J. S.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN your review of Mr. Jay's sermon on the Jubilee, I was struck with the similarity which the part you have quoted bears to a passage I have read elsewhere, of which I subjoin a copy.

"No legislator, unless conscious of being divinely inspired, would have committed himself by enacting such a law as this: nor can any thing be found among the systems of jurisprudence of any other nations, ancient or modern. It therefore stands as a proof that Moses acted, not according to the dictates of human policy, but by the express direction of the Almighty God.—How incredible is it, that any legislator would have proposed such a law as this; or any people have submitted to it, except in consequence of the fullest conviction on both sides, that a divine authority enacted this law, and that a peculiar providence would constantly facilitate its execution!—Nothing could have produced this conviction, but the experience or belief of such miraculous interpositions as the history of the Pentateuch details. The very existence of this law is a standing monument, that, when it was given, the Mosaic miracles were fully believed. Now the law

was coeval with the witnesses of the miracles themselves." (*Graves*).

Scott's Family Bible. Notes. Lev. xxv. 20—22. (Ed. 1803).

L. G.

P. S. Not having read Dr. Graves, I have given you the quotation as it stands in the comment.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IT has often struck me with considerable surprise, that, in the national Catechisms of the countries professing the Lutheran form of religion—such as that of Sweden and others—there should remain to this day that most important error and capital defect of the total omission of the Second Commandment in the enumeration of the Divine Decalogue; and it seems to me a fair object of inquiry, upon what principle a church, calling itself Evangelical, should have so long continued "least in the kingdom of heaven" in its elementary system of instruction. Does it not seem, in that particular, to incur in some measure the guilt of those "who take away from the words of the book of the sacred canon?"

Observing that you occasionally favour us with foreign religious intelligence, and believing that some respectable foreign clergymen are occasional contributors to your useful publication, I thought, by addressing a letter to you on the subject, some elucidation might be received, whether the Second Commandment has been uniformly restored to its proper place, by any particular Lutheran churches? Why it was first suppressed? And why this tacit bowing to the enslaving influence of image-worship should have continued so long to darken and depress the minds of Christians otherwise enlightened?

It will at the same time form an object of fair inquiry, by what sort of reasoning or theological deduc-

tions the Lutheran church justifies the prevailing practice of making the afternoon and evening of the Sabbath-day a scene of recreation and amusement, in which, on the continent, all her sons and ministers uniformly join? Independently of the actual violation of God's holy law which this practice evidently constitutes, there seems to me nothing so effectual to counteract the good effects of the devotions and instruction of the morning, as the immediate conversion of the attention in the evening to concerts, conversations, card-parties, and other sports. This I mention, however, with no invidious view; for though irregularity of this kind be not established among us by law, yet God knows how very defective the great body of professing Christians in this country are in their observance of the Christian Sabbath; but I bring it forward as affording matter for serious consideration and candid inquiry, which may be useful both to Lutherans and members of the English church, and which I hope some of your able correspondents will therefore take up. You will oblige me by the insertion of this letter; and to hear of the dissemination of purer principles and more evangelical practice, among the Christian community at large, will always give great satisfaction to

ONE OF YOUR CONSTANT READERS.

FAMILY SERMONS. No. XIV.

Mark i. 15.—*Believe the Gospel.*

HAVING in the last sermon explained the nature and urged the necessity of repentance, it is intended now to consider what is meant by the command to believe the Gospel; in other words, what are the nature and the effects of true Christian faith*.

* The following sermon is a close abstract of four of the Homilies of our church; viz. those contained from p. 27 to

As it is through faith that we first come to God, and by faith that we are justified before him, it is important that we should rightly understand its nature. There are two kinds of faith spoken of in Scripture. The one, which is called a *dead faith*, brings forth no good works, but is barren and unfruitful. Such is the faith of devils: they believe, and even tremble; yet they do nothing well. And such is the faith of those who, while "they profess that they know God, yet in works deny him." The mere belief that there is a God, and that the Scriptures are true, may very well consist, as every day's experience proves, with an ungodly life. Such a faith, therefore, cannot be considered as the true faith of the Gospel. It is a dead faith; and not that substantial faith by which a man may hope for grace, mercy, and everlasting life, at the hands of God, but rather for indignation and punishment.

There is, however, another faith spoken of in Scripture, which is very different from the last. It is not a dead or unfruitful, but a living and productive faith, "working by love," and issuing in obedience to God. This faith is not merely a general assent to the different articles of the Creed: it is, moreover, a sincere trust in the mercy of God, through Christ, and a steadfast hope of all good things to be received at his hand;—a firm belief, that if, with truly penitent hearts, we turn from sin unto God, he will freely forgive our offences for our Saviour's sake, and make us heirs with him of his heavenly kingdom; and that in the mean time he will be our defender in all dangers, a loving father unto us—correcting us, indeed, for our sins, but not withdrawing his mercy finally from us, provided we trust in him, commit ourselves wholly unto him, depend only upon him, and study

p. 40 of the last Oxford edition, including the three Sermons on Faith, and the first Sermon on Good Works.

to serve and to obey him. This is true Christian faith, which consists not in outward profession only, but lives and works inwardly in the heart. And this faith is always accompanied by hope and trust in God; by the love of God and of our neighbour; by the fear of God; and by a desire to hear and understand the word of God, and to conform to it in all things, carefully abstaining from the evil which it forbids, and cheerfully performing every good work which it commands.

Of this faith it is to be remarked: first, that without it no good works can be done which shall be pleasing and acceptable unto God: second, that it does not lie dead and inactive in the soul, but is lively and fruitful in good works.

I. It has been said, that without faith no good works can be done which shall be pleasing and acceptable to God. In proof of this, it is only necessary to refer to those sayings of St. Paul: "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and, "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." Equally decisive is that declaration of our Saviour; "As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: so neither can ye, except he abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing." Now it is faith alone which can unite us to Christ, or give life to the soul; and they are as much dead to God who want faith, as they are to the world whose bodies have ceased to breathe. Without faith, all the works we do, let them appear ever so fair in the eyes of men, are but dead before God, and unavailing to everlasting life: they are but the shadows of good things; for from true faith alone can proceed such works as are really good and pleasing to God. It is the motive and the intention of any work which makes it either good or bad; and it is faith alone which can furnish a right motive, or point to a

right end. If a man, for instance, should clothe the naked and feed the hungry, and perform many other works of the same kind, yet should not be influenced in what he does by a principle of faith, by love to God, and a desire to please him and to do his will, such works will be but vain and fruitless as they respect himself. It is faith which renders any work pleasing to God; and where it is wanting, no really good work can be performed. Indeed, that "faith which worketh by love," includes all good works. If we possess it, we possess the ground of every thing excellent: for all the Christian graces may be referred to faith as their root and principle; and without faith we can have but the shadow of those graces. In short, the whole life of those who are destitute of true faith is alienated from God, and therefore sinful; for nothing can be good independently of him who is the only author of goodness. The soul which does not enjoy communion with him (and it is only by faith that communion with him is to be enjoyed), can possess, at best, but a feigned goodness. Without faith, therefore, whatever good deeds a man may appear to do, he can have no spiritual life. But by true faith alone, though unaccompanied by any other work, may a man be made a partaker of the favour of God and everlasting happiness. One such instance, at least, we have in Scripture. The penitent thief on the cross did believe only, and the most merciful God justified him. It will be said, that, had time been allowed him, he would have done good works. This is true; but it is not the less true, that, as the case was, faith only saved him. Had he lived, and not regarded faith and the works of faith, he would have lost his salvation again. Thus much, however, is certain; that faith alone saved him, but by works alone was never man justified. At the same time it must be strenuously maintained, that true faith, where there is opportu-

nity, will ever be productive of good works.

II. But this brings us to the second head; which was to shew, that faith will not lie dead and inactive in the soul, but will ever be lively and fruitful in good works. For as the light cannot be hid, but will in some way shew itself; so true faith cannot be concealed, but, as there is opportunity, will manifest itself by good works. The soul that has a living faith will always be employed in some good work, which shall shew that it is alive and active. For true Christian faith, as has been already said, is not only a belief of all things contained in the Bible, but it is an earnest trust and confidence, which those entertain, who, truly repenting of their sins, turn to God with their whole hearts, and stedfastly resolve, through his grace, to obey and serve him for the time to come; that he cares for them as a father for the child he loves, and that he will be merciful to them, for his only Son's sake;—and also a cordial reliance on Jesus Christ as their perpetual advocate and high priest, on whose merits, oblation, and suffering, alone, they depend for the washing away of their sins. This, and this only, is true scriptural faith. The man who possesses it, when he considers what God has done for him, and how freely and undeservedly mercy has been extended to him, is moved, through the gracious influence of the Spirit of God, to labour after a conformity to his will in all things, to desire his favour as the chief good, and to fear his displeasure as the worst of evils; and this not so much from the dread of punishment, as from feelings of gratitude and love. “Blessed is the man who thus trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth its fruit in its season. His leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

No truth is more clearly established in Scripture than this; that

a good life must ever accompany a true faith; for “faith worketh by love,” and “love is the fulfilling of the law.” If, therefore, our conversation be not according to godliness, it is plain that the faith we profess is but a feigned, and not a true faith.

How fruitful this true faith is, in every holy and devout affection, and in every good work, St. Paul instructs us fully, in the eleventh chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews. All the holy men, of whom St. Paul there speaks, had their faith stedfastly fixed on God, when all the world was against them. They did not only know God to be the Lord, Maker and Governor of all mankind; but they had also a special trust and confidence that he was and would be their God, their Comforter, Helper, and Defender. And we see in them the admirable effects of such a faith:—of what patient and persevering labour; what self-denying obedience; what superiority to the world and all the objects of time and sense; what firm reliance on the promises of God; what devotedness to his service; what unshaken constancy in suffering; what joy in tribulation and persecution, and even in death itself, it was the living spring and fruitful source! The same faith which they had, we also ought to have: only with this difference, that by the coming of Christ we have received more abundant communications of the Holy Spirit, and may therefore attain to higher degrees of faith and trust in God than many of them enjoyed. But still our faith must be of the same kind with theirs; and from St. Paul's account it is evident, that true faith is no dead, vain, or unfruitful feeling, but a principle of wonderful power and strength, producing holiness of heart and life.

Scripture thus clearly testifying that a true faith in Christ brings forth good works, every man ought to try and examine himself diligently, whether he have in his heart that faith which God requires.

And this he can only know by its fruits. Many of the early professors of Christianity erred, in thinking that they knew God and believed in him, while their lives declared the contrary. But St. John exposes and confutes this error in his First Epistle, where he says, "Hereby we do know that we know God, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God;" "and we know that whosoever is born of God, sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." And in his Third Epistle he thus sums up the whole matter of faith and works: "He that doeth good, is of God; but he that doeth evil, hath not seen God."

Thus does St. John shew that a right knowledge of God, and faith in him, produce good works. And the view of the subject which he has given us, is fully confirmed by what Christ himself has taught us. "He that believeth on the Son," says our blessed Saviour, "hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth in me, hath everlasting life." Now since he that believes in Christ has everlasting life, it thence follows that he must also be fruitful in good works, and obedient to the commandments of God. For to those who continue to do evil, and who lead their lives in disobedience and transgression, belongs, if they die impenitent, not everlasting life, but everlasting death, as Christ himself hath assured us.

Having thus shewn that no one should flatter himself that he possesses true Christian faith, when he does not live in obedience to God's laws, and in submission to his will, it seems necessary to add, that

a man may easily deceive himself in this matter. He may indulge a notion, that by faith he knows God, loves him, fears him, and belongs to him, when, in truth, he does nothing less. The trial of all these things is a godly and Christian life. He who feels that his great aim in life is to advance the honour of God, who labours to know the will of God, and to frame his conduct according to it; who loves not to indulge the desires of the flesh, and to serve sin and Satan, but is fully purposed to serve God, and for his sake to love all mankind, whether they are friends or enemies, and to do them good as he has opportunity: such a man may well rejoice in God, perceiving, as he must, by the tenor of his life, that he really possesses a right knowledge of God, and a lively and unfeigned faith. But he who refuses to submit his neck to the yoke of God's law, and lives impenitently, following his own sensual inclinations, without any desire to know or to practise the will of God; such a man, if he think that he either knows God, loves him, fears him, or trusts in him, clearly deceives himself; he is a stranger to the faith of the Gospel.

But, to apply the subject. There are some who fancy, that, because they regularly attend church, and use the language and mix in the society of the children of God, that they therefore belong to God, although, at the same time, they live in sin. But St. John says plainly, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."

Others vainly think that they know and love God, though they pay no regard to his commandments, and even consider themselves as freed from the obligation to obey them. But St. John has told us expressly, "He that saith, I know God, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

Some, again, falsely persuade

themselves that they love God, while they shew no love to their neighbour. But St. John has assured us, "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar. Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

Deceive not yourselves, therefore, by thinking that you truly believe the Gospel, that you possess true Christian faith, while you live in sin; for your ungodly and sinful life infallibly proves the contrary, whatever you may say or think. Our everlasting happiness depends on our having true Christian faith: it is therefore incumbent on us to ascertain whether we have it or no. Let us, therefore, try and examine ourselves, and not assume, on light grounds, that we possess true faith; but scrutinize the fruits which appear in our hearts and lives, in our temper, affections, and conduct, and thence judge of the genuineness of our faith. *The tree is known by its fruit.* Let us, then, by the good works which we do, prove our faith to be the true Christian faith. Let us, by those graces which ought to spring from faith, shew our election to be sure and stable, as St. Peter has taught us: "Endeavour yourselves to make your calling and election certain, by good works;" and, "Besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love:" so shall we shew that we have within us a living Christian faith, and may both assure our own consciences and satisfy other men that we are right. But if these fruits do not spring from our faith, we do by our profession but mock God, and deceive ourselves and others. We may in that case bear the name of Christians, but we want the true faith which stamps the Christian, and distinguishes him from other men. Our works must be an open

evidence of our faith; otherwise, our faith, being without good works, is but the faith of devils; a mere notional, and not a true Christian faith. And as neither the devils, nor the openly wicked and profane, derive any advantage from their false and dead faith, which tends rather to increase their condemnation: so likewise will it be in the case of those professing Christians, who, though they have received the knowledge both of God and of the merits of Christ, nevertheless lead an idle, inactive life, without good works, under the vain idea that a barren faith will save them; or who have their affections fixed on the world, and its perishing objects, and do not bring forth the fruits which belong to their high profession. Such presumptuous persons and wilful sinners are liable to the vengeance of God, and to that eternal punishment in hell which is prepared for the openly wicked and profane. You, therefore, who profess the name of Christ, be exhorted to permit no such notion of faith to beguile you to your ruin; but be sure of your faith: try it by your life; examine the fruits which it produces; mark whether it serves to enlarge your love to God and man, and cause you to abound in the work of the Lord; that you may know whether it be a true, lively faith, or not. If you are conscious, on good grounds, that you possess such a faith, rejoice in it, and be diligent to maintain it. Let it be daily strengthened and increased by holy activity; so may you be confident that you shall please God, and at length, as other faithful men have been before, shall you, when he sees fit, be taken to himself, there to "receive the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." Amen.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

I BELIEVE it is usual in most places (at least it has been so in most of those which have fallen under my

own observation), when any child is to be baptized on the Sunday, to defer the ceremony till after the service, when most, if not all, who are not personally concerned, have left the church. Now this is certainly not the right mode of procedure. It is very clear from the Rubrick prefixed to the office for the Public Baptism of Infants, that our church intends as many persons as may be to be present, and even positively directs that the rite of baptism should be administered "immediately after the last lesson" at either morning or evening service. But, independently of this direction, let the matter be calmly considered, and I think there cannot exist a doubt as to the utility of performing the ceremony in a full congregation. The first reason given by our church for requiring it—viz. the expediency of publicity ("as well for that the congregation there present may testify the receiving of them that are newly baptized into the number of Christ's church"), is certainly not without its weight. The second is more important—viz. "that every man present may be put in remembrance of his own profession made to God in his baptism"—and is likely to have such good effects, at least on serious minds, that it is surprising it does not forcibly impress itself on every clergyman, and overcome his fear of keeping his congregation too long in church. But there is another consideration, and one that would operate on my mind more forcibly than either of the others: it is this; that, by having the child baptized in a full congregation, the prayers of all the pious part of it are procured. And is this nothing? "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man," we are told, "availeth much;" and surely we may hope, that, in every congregation, there are some such, who would with pleasure perform an act like this of Christian charity. Were I a parent, Mr. Editor, who wished to see my child grow up from his early

years in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, I would bring him into a full church to be baptized. Were I a sponsor, who wished to fulfil the duties of the charge which I then took upon myself, I should think this the best means that could be employed at that tender age, and equally incumbent on me with my own prayers, for his growth in religion. And were I a minister, who was anxious for the welfare of my flock, I should think the administration of the sacrament at that time one of the best methods I could use for the benefit of the rising generation. But I have another complaint to make, the subject of which is intimately connected with what I have been speaking of hitherto; and it is this, that many, who join in the other parts of the service, with propriety as well as devotion, continue in the same posture from the time that the minister leaves the desk, to officiate at the font till the ceremony is concluded; and, however their minds may be employed, do not certainly shew by their bodies that they feel themselves very much interested in what is going forward. I am inclined to think, that this is a relic of that conformity to the world, which is too observable amongst many Christians; that they continue the practice at first, through a dread of singularity, and that thus a habit is imperceptibly acquired, which they are scarcely able at last to trace up to its original source. But, whatever be its cause in individuals, the practice appears to me to be blameable; for if the ceremony is to be attended to at all by the rest of the congregation (and no devout Christian can, I think, entertain a doubt of this), the arguments for worshipping with the body, as well as with the heart, which apply to other devotional services, apply with equal force to the present case.

If you judge these cursory remarks worthy a place in your work, they may perhaps induce some persons to consider this subject more atten-

tively than formerly, and may be the means of leading them to juster conceptions with respect to it.

HANO.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

You inserted, in your last number, some observations with which I troubled you respecting the diversity of opinions in religion. Fearing lest my paper should afford encouragement to Scepticism, I went on to shew that we need not despair of attaining to religious truth; and I promised to point out, in a succeeding communication, some of the means of acquiring the possession of it. I now proceed with my discussion.

There are two principal modes, by no means incompatible with each other, in which religious truth is to be sought—the one, prayer to the Father of Lights; the other, the diligent and unprejudiced use of that reason and common sense with which God has endowed us. It is important not to disjoin these two; for God, as I apprehend, has no more promised to guide that man by his grace who allows every faculty to lie dormant, than he has engaged to introduce those to the truth who aim to arrive at it by the unassisted and unsanctified exercise of their natural understanding. The one of these classes of men the Almighty often leaves to the pride of their own hearts; the other he, in his no less just judgment, allows to be the sport of enthusiasm.

The Scriptures are the great depository of religious truth; and therefore both our prayer and diligence should be employed in endeavouring to deduce it from that source. Our supplication should be, that God would bless to us his own word, not that he should miraculously convey to our minds any new revelation; and our diligence should be exerted in endeavouring to discover the true meaning of the Sacred Writings, and the right application of them to our own ca-

under the existing circumstances. We should be extremely careful to adopt a right *system of interpretation*. The mode of construing them ought, as I conceive, to be exactly that which we should agree to follow in the case of any other book, written in the same period of the world, abounding with similar idioms, and translated into our own language after the same manner. The simple, obvious, and natural sense, which is to be judged of partly by the context, is unquestionably the true signification. Doubtful texts are to be explained by the aid of those which are more clear; and the few passages in which obscurity remains, are not to be rested upon as deciding points of great importance. Truths, plainly, frequently, and variously inculcated, are to be deemed of superior moment; and those doctrines which sustain each other ought to be considered as deriving confirmation from this circumstance. Care should be taken not to employ those texts, for the establishment even of important points, which were not intended for that purpose. In no sense should we attempt to be “wise above what is written.” We should be neither more nor less doctrinal, neither more nor less practical, neither more nor less moral, neither more nor less spiritual, than Holy Writ. We should not attempt to improve upon Christ and his apostles, and should guard against an inventive spirit. We should adopt their types, their sacraments, their mysteries; but we should be cautious how we multiply these, or extend the meaning of their terms. We should, generally speaking, be plain, simple, and natural, in our theology, as they were; without, however, professing to be always literal or verbal. The language which they used was evidently popular, and all popular language freely allows the use of metaphor. It was not of that measured kind which is employed by a philosopher speaking to philosophers, but was eminently distinguished by the

warmth and glow which become a person addressing himself to a mixed and common audience, and speaking from the heart. I cannot help suspecting, Mr. Editor, that, if we would all agree to construe the Scriptures in this spirit, our theological disputes would shrink into a much narrower compass, and the difficulty of attaining to the truth would exceedingly abate.

Seriousness is also necessary in the discovery of religious truth. The Greeks and Romans were evidently not serious in respect to their theology. The fabrication of it had been chiefly the work of their poets, a light and fanciful class of men; the people with equal levity adopted the superstitions which the versifiers had supplied; and they associated it with many of the amusements of life. The Israelites, when they worshipped their golden calf, sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. But the God of the Christians is a jealous God. Inquiries into his character and attributes are not to be conducted without sacred awe. The Gospel is a serious thing. Death, judgment, eternity, heaven, and hell, are serious subjects; and whatsoever investigation has any bearing on our everlasting condition, ought to be pursued with great solemnity. Christianity is to be inquired into, not merely with that sort of gravity which befits all the more important subjects of human contemplation: it not only ought never to be treated with levity; it is to be contemplated with a seriousness quite peculiar to itself.

The search after religious truth must also be made with perseverance. The Almighty is said, in one part of Scripture, to be a God that hideth himself; and our Saviour, when upon earth, repelled for a time some of those inquirers who approached him. It seems to be a part of the plan of the Almighty to put our sincerity to the test, in the first part of our religious progress, by allowing difficulties to obstruct our way. An Apocryphal writer, speak-

ing of Wisdom, says, "At first she will walk with him in crooked ways, and will bring fear and dread upon him, until she tire his soul. Then will she walk with him by the right way, and comfort him, and shew him her secrets." "Then shall ye know," says the apostle, "if ye follow on to know the Lord." "For the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more to the perfect day." Our religious course is a course of successive discoveries: it is a state of continual progress: and it is thus made pleasant to us; for our confidence increases as our feet advance. Let those, who are now perplexed with doubts and fears, bear this encouraging circumstance in their mind. A pious writer has compared the dimness which for a time prevails in many minds, to that kind of morning mist which betokens a peculiarly bright and glorious day. Many, doubtless, have experienced great darkness for a time, who have afterwards enjoyed the steady light of the Gospel. After sowing in tears, they have, even in this world, reaped with joy; and in proportion to their early perplexity and distress, they have eventually abounded in consolation: but these are they who have persevered; who have determined to seek until they found; who have prayed and not fainted.

Lastly, this important inquiry should be pursued with all impartiality. The diversities in the religion of professing Christians arise not so much from any difficulty in the subject, or obscurity in the sacred writings, as from the different complexions of men's minds, and the great variety of their circumstances. "Man," said a writer lately deceased, "is a bundle of habits." Man is also a bundle of prejudices. Lord Bacon has distributed the prejudices of mankind into four heads; and it may be convenient to adopt, in this place, the classification which he has supplied. He has given to our prejudices the quaint term of idols, or false appear-

ances; and has designated them under the titles of idols of the tribe, idols of the cave or den, idols of the theatre, and idols of the market.

First, there are idols of the tribe. Men live in tribes or parties; and in religion, as in other things, they borrow the opinions of those among whom they dwell. This is one great source of religious error. Let us beware of it. We have one master, even Christ. We must emancipate ourselves from a mere sect or party in religion, if we would hope to attain to the purest and simplest truth.

Secondly, there are idols of the cave or den; that is, there are prejudices belonging to our condition in life, to the profession which we follow, to the place or cave in which we dwell. Our minds are narrowed by our circumstances; our judgment is warped through some peculiarities in our situation. We should therefore consider what the errors to which men, whose lot in life is cast as ours is, are likely to be prone; and we should use all reasonable means to counteract them.

Are we much occupied? Are we necessarily engrossed by some secular employment, by which, also, we find it hard to live? We are in danger of conceiving religion to consist in little else than worldly diligence, of undervaluing doctrinal knowledge, of excusing our religious ignorance, and of too exclusively approving those parts of Scripture which recommend what is plainly excellent in practice.---Are we ministers of the Gospel? We are perhaps exposed to peril on a contrary side. We are then in danger, especially if we abound in intellectual leisure, and are also of a thinking habit, of unnecessarily multiplying doctrinal distinctions, of estimating piety too much by the degree of skill in theological science, by the quantity of religious talk, and by a disposition to attend our own ministry.--Do we live alone? We are in danger of being harsh and even misanthropic in our

sentiments:---In company? Let us fear lest we be too yielding.

Thirdly, there are the idols of the theatre. By these I mean the prejudices arising from the peculiar view of subjects which we take in consequence of the light in which the natural constitution of our mind leads us to see them. Some men are of a warm and eager, some of a cold and phlegmatic disposition. Some are more impressible by love; others by fear. Some are full of imagination; others fond of exercising their reason. Some are for effecting every thing in a moment; others are more quiet, patient, and persevering. Some delight in tracing causes to their effects; others are addicted to the marvellous. Now religion is nearly in the medium between these several extremes; she is well proportioned in all her parts. Such, I mean, she is in herself, and such she is portrayed in Holy Scripture. But will she always be thus delineated by the pencil even of her own votaries? They will represent her in what they deem indeed to be true beauty. But their taste is defective. She is seen by them in a false light. A certain disproportion is given to this or the other member, by means of some inequality in the mirror in which they are accustomed to behold her; an obscurity is cast on this or the other part, through some imperfection in the stage or theatre on which they see her exhibited. Let us endeavour to know ourselves, that we may counteract this error in our optics, and discern moral truth and beauty in their just proportion.

Lastly, there are the idols of the market. Our religious, as well as all our other sentiments are necessarily communicated through the imperfect medium of human language. The commerce of ideas is carried on by the means of this variable and imperfect sign; and numberless are the errors and prejudices which arise from the want of a more determinate standard of value for the

conduct of this traffic. Mr. Locke conceives that more than half the differences among men may be referred to the diversity of the meaning of words; and Lord Bacon seemed to have been nearly of the same opinion. The moderns are become more intellectual and also more literal than the ancients: this is the natural course of human society. Correctness has increased, and philosophy has advanced. Warmth of feeling has abated, and the spirit of poetry has declined. Our whole language has partaken of this change, and in the main has profited by it; but we have not, perhaps, sufficiently considered that Scripture communicated religious truth at a time when language was far less precise than it is at present. On this account the sacred writings fail to decide many questions, both of a nice theological and of a metaphysical kind, on which some theologians have dogmatized in succeeding days.

But I must not any further trespass on the patience of your readers. Let me only suggest, that our disputes about words are much more numerous than is commonly imagined; and that the diversities in the religious sentiments of good men will doubtless be found, in the great day of account, to have been far less than they appeared to be in this imperfect world.

I will conclude with a passage from a pious divine, well suited to the close of such a paper as the present,---

"Be sure to live on the great fundamentals of religion, and let not your attention to these be diverted by an intemperate zeal about lesser things. Place not your religion in disputable points and ineffectual opinions, but in those weightier matters of the law and Gospel which are of undoubted importance, and in which holy men, among all the different denominations of Christians, are better agreed than is commonly apprehended. Choose God

for your portion and felicity; and live daily upon Christ Jesus as the only mediator by whom you can either have access to God or acceptance with him. Indulge no sin---plead for no infirmity---but make it the daily business of your lives 'to mortify the deeds of the body.'

"Rest not in a low degree of holiness, but love and long and strive for the highest. And for these purposes pray without ceasing for those promised influences of divine grace which can alone heal your diseased natures, and carry you forward from one degree of holiness to another, till, being ripened for glory, an entrance shall in due time be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

S. P.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

June 13th, 1809*.

I WAS afraid the Gypsies had been quite forgotten; and therefore it gives me real pleasure to see, by your last number (for May 1809), that another correspondent has taken up their cause. If the subject was once fairly before the public, I am persuaded it would interest the feelings of many amongst us; and, should good arise from it, which with God's help and blessing could not fail to be the case, we might confidently look forward to a daily increasing fund for its support. Surely, when our charity is flowing in so wide a channel, conveying the blessings of the Gospel to the most distant quarters of the globe, we shall not hesitate to water this one barren and neglected field in our own land. My attention was first drawn to the state of this miserable class of human beings by the letter of "Fraternicus;"

* The following letter ought to have appeared some months since, but was accidentally overlooked.

and looking upon it as a reproach to our country, that, amidst the great light that prevails, so many of its children should be walking in darkness and the shadow of death, I was anxious to contribute something out of my abundance towards their spiritual welfare.

—I perfectly agree with your correspondent, that no time should be lost in devising some plan which may give consistency and effect to this work of faith and labour of love. In this short and uncertain life, no opportunities of usefulness should be neglected. It is a call which may never again be repeated. I am ready, and desirous, to give "Minimus" the proposed meeting; and the time and place might be appointed through the medium of the *Christian Observer*. I must, however, premise, that the writer of this is a very humble individual in all respects, both in abilities and in influence. My habits are very retired, and at present my time is occupied in attending to the ministerial duties of a populous village. I shall most gladly adhere to my first proposal*, and might be induced to do more, if need required. In the mean time, it is my earnest prayer to God, that this may

not be one of those projects, which are only talked of, but never begun; but that it may tend to the glory of his name, and to the bringing back these poor lost sheep to the fold of their Redeemer. Amen.

Yours, H.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

IN the *Anti-Jacobin Review* for September last, a quotation is given from "Remarks on the Necessity of Divine Inspiration, and the Usefulness of Lay Preaching. By T. Kelk, Truro."

Mr. Kelk, in stating the requisite qualifications in order to any one's being received into "full connection" as a "methodist preacher," enumerates several questions which "are proposed to each candidate," who is required to answer them "satisfactorily." One of these questions is, "Have you constant power over all sin?" This is so strongly expressed, that I confess I know not how it can be *truly* answered in the affirmative. I should be glad if some leading character among the Methodists would explain what is the true import of this question; and what is meant by a "satisfactory" answer to it.

INQUISITOR.

* See *Christ. Obs.* for 1803, p. 712.

MISCELLANEOUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

REPENTANCE is a sorrow for sin, and an abhorrence of it as offensive to God and ruinous to ourselves. A view of the sufferings of Christ, as atoning for transgression, and an humble hope of obtaining pardon and salvation through his precious blood-shedding, are its attendants; while its effects are a sincere determination to live to the glory of God, in the practice of ho-

liness. In particular cases, we have further evidence of the change of mind supposed to have taken place in the penitent, by reflections and actions suited to his circumstances. In an age like the present, when the prevalence of war opens the door to a thousand acts of rapacity and licentiousness; and when the highest dignities do not secure the possessor from experiencing the severest reverse of calamity and misfortune; it may not be unprofitable

to bring to the recollection of your readers two instances, in which the minds of an able general and a great monarch discovered that sense of guilt, and humility of confession, which become those who lie under the afflicting hand of God.

The prince of Conti, of the blood-royal of France, who died at Paris in 1664, is mentioned by Lord Clarendon (*Tracts*, p. 159) as a striking example of the power of conscience in a real penitent. Feeling his end approach, he dictated part of his will in the following terms: "I am extremely sorry to have been so unhappy as to find myself in my younger age engaged in a war contrary to my duty; during which, I permitted, ordered, and authorized violences and disorders without number; and although the king hath had the goodness to forget this failing, I remain nevertheless justly accountable before God, to those corporations and particular persons who then suffered, be it in Guyenne, Xaintonge, Berry, La Marche; be it in Champaigne, and about Damvilliers; upon which account I have caused certain sums to be restored, of which the *Sieur Jasse*, my treasurer, hath a particular account; and I have greatly desired that it were in my power to sell all my estate, that I might give a more full satisfaction. But having, upon this occasion, submitted myself to the judgment of many prelates, and learned and pious persons, they have judged that I was not obliged to reduce myself altogether to the condition of a private man, but that I ought to serve God in my rank and quality; in which, nevertheless, I have withdrawn as much as was possible from my household expences, to the end that, during my life, I may restore every year as much as I can save of my revenues. And I charge my heirs, who shall hereafter be named in this my will, to do the same thing, until the damages that I have caused be fully repaired, according to the instructions which shall be found in

the hands of the *Sieur Jasse*, or in my papers."

In the paper of instructions to his executors, he adds: "The order which I desire may be observed in the restitution which I am obliged to make in Guyenne, &c.—In the first place, those losses and damages which have been caused by my orders, or my troops, ought to be repaired before all others, as being of my own doing. In the second place, I am responsible very justly for all the mischiefs which the general disorders of the war have produced, although they have been done without my having any part in them, provided that I have satisfied for the first. I owe no reparation to those who have been of our party, except they can make it appear that I have sought and invited them to it; and in this case it will be just to restore first of all to those innocent persons who have had no part in my failings, before that any thing can be given to those who have been our confederates. The better to observe this distributive justice, I desire that my restitutions may be made in such a manner, that they may be spread every where; to the end that it fall not out, that, amongst many that have suffered, some be satisfied, and others have nothing."

The disorders which occurred in France, in the early part of the reign of Lewis the Thirteenth, the period alluded to by the prince, owing to the disputes among the royal family, and the opposition of the catholics to the protestant cause, are well known. Let us hope that the restitutions provided by Conti were attended with self-abasement and evangelical humiliation. They will then be a good comment on those words of the prophet: "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he hath robbed, walk in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live, he shall not die." *Ezek. xxxiii. 15.*

The second instance to which I alluded, is that of our own unfortu-

nate monarch, Edward the Second. We are told in his life, by Barnes (p. 19), that when he was taken prisoner by his subjects, and confined in Kenelworth castle—his queen Isabella and his son Edward refusing to visit him, and the tide of popularity hastening to the utmost ebb—he composed some verses in monkish rhyme, after the manner of that age, which are indicative of penitence, and acquiescence in the Divine dispensations. I give them in the quaint translation of the historian:—

“What time rough winter’s blasts the earth
did tame,
Storms of all fortune shook my glorious
frame!

There’s none so wise, so merciful, and fair,
Prudent and shining with all virtues rare;
But he’s by abject wretches trampled down,
If fortune once on his endeavour’s frown.
That hand, that once did grace to all dis-
pense,

Can move no heart to a remorseful sense:
That royal face, whose smiles afforded bliss,
With clouds of dark dishonour blacken’d is:
My vassals once, do spurn me now: and
those,

Whom I esteemed my friends, do prove my
foes.

Oh! who that heard how once they prais’d
my name,

Would think that from those tongues these
slanders came?

But, sinful soul! why dost thou thus repine,
When justly humbled by the hand divine?

A Father’s scourge is for our profit meant,
I see thy rod,—and, Lord, I am content.

Chide me, my Father, till thou wilt give o’er;
Afflict, till thou art pleased to restore:

Thy son submits, and doth thy will obey;
But grieves, so long he did the work delay!

Now then, my Father, view my wretched
case,

And shine upon me with a smiling face.

Forgive what’s past: for what’s to come,
assist;

Then I’ll take gladly what my murderers
list.

I’ve lost my kingdom; yet I shan’t repine,
If, after all, I gain but that of thine!

To thee, sweet Jesus, humbly here I bend;
I loath my sins; do thou thy pardon send.

Fountain of love, allow my hearty prayers;
Remember thine own blood, though not my
tears.

When man afflicts, then, Lord, do thou
forgive;
And when I die, grant that my soul may
live!”

“Thus did this poor king,” adds his biographer, “repent all his former vanities most heartily, no way repining at this punishment and heavy stroke of God’s hand; but made so good use of these afflictions that ’tis more than hoped he fitted himself for a kingdom more durable, to which his enemies longed to send him.”

In reading history, we ought to make it our business to notice these and such-like examples of human vicissitude; and pray for grace, that, with the Apostle, we may be enabled to say: “I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound.” And may a conviction of sin, whether in prosperity or adversity, lead us to that fountain which is opened for all uncleanness; and to that divine Helper, who will assist us to prove the reality of our conversion, by letting our light shine before men, restoring the ox or the ass that we have taken, and desiring in all things to approve ourselves void of offence towards God and towards man.

HISTORICUS.

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

THE following is a correct copy of a letter written by the first and excellent George Lord Lyttelton to Mr. Williams, the author of the “Diary,” as is supposed. The original, which is now before me, was lately found amongst some family papers of Mr. Williams’s; but the cover, with the direction, is lost. There can, however, be little doubt but that the letter was sent to that gentleman. I have sent it, by permission, for insertion in the *Christian Observer*, if you think it suitable for that purpose, pledging myself for the correctness of the copy.

I am, &c.

GEO. CUSTANCE.

Kidderminster, Jan. 10, 1810.

SIR,

Hagley, June 23, 1749.

"I think myself extremely obliged to you for the concern you express for my salvation, in a letter I received from you just before I came out of town. Your apprehensions about it seem chiefly to arise from my being in a state of wealth and prosperity, which you think very dangerous from those words of our Saviour—" Verily I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." But you will be pleased to consider, that, when he said this, *the entering into the kingdom of heaven*—viz. the professing Christianity—was much harder to a rich man than it is now, because it was then an obligation upon him actually to part with all that he had, and exchange his wealth, pleasures, and honours, for a state of poverty, pain, and contempt. This, at present, is not required. On the contrary, it must be agreeable to the will of God, who has established order and government among mankind, that there should be rich Christians as well as poor, great as well as mean, magistrates as well as subjects. And if good and wise men should be deterred, by understanding that text as strictly applicable to the rich in all times, from endeavouring to acquire riches and power by honest means, or from holding them, when so acquired, with peace of mind; what a condition would the world be in: how much exposed to become the prey of the worst of men, and how little benefited by the goodness of those who are enabled to serve it the best. It is therefore our duty to interpret this and other similar texts in a manner agreeable to the known will of God, and that order of things which he has appointed now that he has thought fit to make Christianity an established religion; viz. to understand them to relate no farther to us, than to deter us from any presumption or confidence, in wealth

or power, independently of him from whom we receive them, and to whom we are accountable for the use that we make of them; or from any such inordinate love of them, as would make us set them above our duties, and not be willing to part with them rather than deny Christ, if such a trial should ever come. It must be also allowed, that a state of prosperity has many temptations peculiar to itself; and so has a state of poverty, too, perhaps *as great* in the present circumstances of the Christian world.

"I hope in God, that, as he has been pleased to place me in the former state rather than in the latter, he will enable me to resist the temptations annexed to that state, and always keep my heart in such dispositions as may render the good he bestows on me beneficial to others, and, by the right use which is made of it, profitable to my eternal as well as temporal interests.

"As to the question you ask me, 'Whether I have at any time felt in my mind the energy and power of the Spirit of God?' I think it safer and wiser to ascribe all good thoughts, dispositions, and actions, to the co-operation of that Holy Spirit with our endeavours, than to pretend to distinguish particular instances when the influence of it is sensibly felt. As to any confidence in my own righteousness, or hope of salvation otherwise than by the merits of Christ, I assure you that I have none: nor am I without a deep sense of my particular wants and weakness, which makes me very thankful to you, who, I am persuaded, are a good man, not only for your friendly concern, but for the prayers that you say you put up for me to our Lord Jesus Christ, which I desire you to continue; and believe me, with sincere regard and esteem of your piety, Sir, your faithful friend and humble servant,

G. LYTTELTON."

To the Editor of the Christian Observer.

"Tempus abire tibi est; ne potam largius
aquo

Redeat et pulset lasciva decentius ætas."

SIR,

As an Observer, you cannot but have noticed that juvenile mode of dress which elderly ladies of the present day think proper to adopt; and, as a Christian Observer, you must have remarked that even religious ladies are not free from this unbecoming foible. How these good women can fail to see, what every one else sees, might be matter of surprize, if we did not know how blind human beings are to their own defects. But I wish they could for a moment behold themselves with other people's eyes, and estimate the disappointment which is felt, when the garments proclaim youth and beauty, while the face, in spite of its flaxen ringlets, betrays the unwilling secret of threescore years and ten. Perhaps the dress even of young ladies is at present somewhat too fantastic; but old women (if such things exist) should know, that what may be tolerated in youth, is not to be endured in age; and that the same thing may be becoming at one period of life, and ridiculous at another.

"Non, si quid Pholoen satis,
Et te, Chlori, decet." HOR.

I wish one of these veteran belles would employ her grandson or nephew to construe the whole of the ode last quoted; she would find in it much good sense, and instruction quite in point.

But what have we to do to judge those that are without? Whatever people of the world may do, ladies professing godliness might be expected to know better things. In these characters I have been highly grieved to witness the fault I am complaining of; and am seriously at a loss to reconcile it with their professed subjection to the Gospel of Christ. I can hardly think that

there is a real deadness to the world, where the dress exhibits such strong symptoms of unmortified vanity. When I figure to myself a devout female, I always picture her dress, not indeed affectedly singular, but correctly sober, and suited to her age and station. Nor do I represent to myself Anna, serving God with fastings and prayers, night and day, in the attire of a gay and pleasure-loving widow.

Supposing that it were a sacrifice to quit a post which is no longer tenable, those who are acquainted with the hopes of the Gospel should be able cheerfully to make it. But I imagine there is a mistake here; elderly ladies forget that age has its beauties and its ornaments, as well as youth: let them seek the honours which are properly their own, and not descend to such as are unworthy of them.

An elderly woman, neat, or simply elegant, is not a repulsive, but an agreeable object, on which the eye rests with pleasure; and if she be adorned with good works, and with the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, she commands that reverence which is the proper tribute of age, but which it must fail to receive when tricked out in girlish habiliments. If, Mr. Observer, you can assist me in fixing the time when a lady should assume a more sober garb than may be required of a girl of nineteen, you would do a valuable service to your countrywomen. For my own part, I cannot help thinking, that at least a female who has attained her fiftieth year, should discover that she is not young, and begin to dress accordingly.

I am, &c.

R. O. S. G., O. S. G. G.

THE following letter arrived too late to be inserted in its proper place: but, being anxious to promote the inquiry which X. Y. has in view, we are not willing to defer its publication.

To the Editor of the *Christian Observer*.

I AM much obliged, as I doubt not that others of your readers are, by the information which Talib has been kind enough to communicate in answer to my inquiries. Yet, as the code of Justinian is neither in my own possession, nor easily perhaps to be consulted by the generality of your readers, I cannot but wish that Talib had transmitted to you, for insertion, a copy of the edict to which the two letters of Justinian, from which he has furnished extracts, refer; together with some account of the occasion upon which it was issued: or that, if the edict be in itself unimportant to the question as to the commencement of papal supremacy, that he had given a brief account of it sufficient to prove that the above-mentioned letters are the only material documents which Justinian can supply. I hope that he may not be unwilling to meet this desire.

The fact whether the emperor Phocas did, or did not, confer on the pope any authority not previously exercised by the see of Rome over the church of Christ; any authority, I mean, which could in any degree answer the idea of "delivering the saints into his hand;" is of such moment to the right interpretation of prophecy; that Talib has rendered an acceptable service in laying before the public the quotations from Paulus Diaconus. Much obscurity still hangs over the grant of Phocas. The whole of Mosheim's account (4to. vol. i. p. 320, in Maclaine's translation) is as follows: "The most learned writers, and those who are most remarkable for their knowledge of antiquity, are generally agreed, that Boniface III. engaged Phocas—that abominable tyrant, who waded to the imperial throne through the blood of the emperor Mauritius—to take from the Bishop of Constantinople the title of *Œcumenical* or *universal bishop*, and to

confer it upon the Roman pontiff. They relate this, however, upon the sole authority of Baronius; for none of the ancient writers have mentioned it. If, indeed, we are to give credit to Anastasius and Paul Deacon*, something like what we have now related was transacted by Phocas. For when the bishops of Constantinople maintained that their church was not only equal in dignity and authority to that of Rome, but also the head of all the Christian churches; this tyrant opposed their pretensions, and granted the pre-eminence to the church of Rome. And thus was the papal supremacy first introduced."

On this subject it may be remarked, in the first place, that the unsupported authority of Baronius, a cardinal of the seventeenth century, as to an event said by him to have occurred above a thousand years before (A. D. 606); an event, too, very interesting, if it actually took place, to the cause of popery; amounts literally to nothing; and we may well be surprised that it should ever have obtained any weight among protestants. In the next place, the testimony even of early popish writers respecting such an event, though it may ultimately prove credible and accurate, ought to be scrupulously examined and sifted. Mosheim, in mentioning the assertions of Anastasius and Paulus Diaconus respecting a grant from Phocas, plainly shews that he doubts extremely whether these writers---the only ancient authorities, so far as at present appears, in support of the existence of a grant from Phocas---are entitled to any credit whatever. Thirdly, according to Talib's quotations from Paulus Diaconus, one of these authorities does not uphold, but, on the contrary, by his silence invalidates, the proposition, that the grant,

* Anastasius de Vitis Pontificum. Paul Diacon. de Rebus gestis Longobardorum, lib. iv. cap. xxxvii. in Muratori Scriptores Rerum Italia, i. part i. p. 46.

if ever it existed, bestowed on the pope the particular title of *Œcumenical* or *universal bishop*. Fourthly, assuming the existence of a grant, as described by Paulus Diaconus, a farther and more important inquiry remains; namely, whether the grant conferred any new power on the pope, in addition to that, whatever it might be, which had been granted by Justinian; or whether, in fact, it gave any thing more than an honorary denomination and a right to formal precedence.

With a view to the removal of these uncertainties, I would request Talib in particular, as well as any other of your correspondents conversant with the subject, to favour you with a specific statement of the testimony of Anastasius on the point in question; of any additional testimony, if there be yet any, to be produced from Paulus Diaconus; of any arguments alleged by Baronius, if he alleges any, in support of his assertion; and of any other authority, if any be known, which may tend to shew whether any grant was ever made by Phocas to Pope Boniface, and what, if a grant was made, was its import.

X. Y.

For the Christian Observer.

LINES ON MISSIONS.

STAMPED as the purpose of the skies,
This promise meets our anxious eyes;
That heathen lands our God shall know,
And warm with faith each bosom glow.

E'en now the hallow'd scenes appear;
E'en now unfolds the promised year!
Lo! distant shores thy heralds trace,
And wing the tidings of thy grace!

'Mid burning climes and frozen plains,
Where pagan darkness brooding reigns,
Oh! mark their steps—their fears subdue,
And nerve their arm, and clear their view!

When, worn by toil, their spirits fail,
Bid them the glorious future hail;
Bid them the crown of life survey,
And onward urge their conquering way!

CHRIST. OBSERV. No. 98.

So on the Indian's gloomy night
The eastern star shall shed her light;
And mild Religion's power controul
She stormy passions of his soul!

So shall Messiah's influence cheer,
His turf-built cot which still is dear;
And heavenly hope his soul pervade,
Though life and time and worlds should
fade!

N.

MOST of your readers must be well acquainted with Cowper's "Report of an adjudged Case, not to be found in any of the Books." It suggested the following trifle, which will be seen to be a continuation, or rather imitation, of that humorous piece. Should you be of opinion that it will contribute to the innocent amusement of your readers, I shall be glad to see it inserted*.

I am, &c.

P. L. H.

* As it may be convenient, for the purpose of comparison, to have the *jeu d'esprit* of Cowper at hand, we will introduce it here. It is as follows:

Between Nose and Eyes a strange contest
arose—

The spectacles set them unhappily wrong—
The point in dispute was, as all the world
knows,

To which the said spectacles ought to be-
long.

So the Tongue was the lawyer, and argued
the case

With a great deal of skill, and a wig full
of learning;

While chief baron Ear sat to balance the case,
So fam'd for his talent in nicely discerning.

In behalf of the Nose, it will quickly appear;
And your lordship, he said, will undoubt-
edly find,

That the Nose has had spectacles always in
wear,

Which amounts to possession, time out of
mind.

Then holding the spectacles up to the court,
Your lordship observes they are made
with a straddle

As wide as the ridge of the nose is; in short,
Design'd to sit close to it, just like the
saddle.

M

NOSE REFUTED,

OR LIPS MOVING FOR A NEW TRIAL,

"Audi alteram partem."

"In the cause at last sessions, of Nose
versus Eyes,

It will clearly appear, my lord, Eyes suffered wrong :

That mistakes from a pressure of business
will rise,

Must be surely allowed by my learned friend
Tongue.

"Eyes now are awakened to see their distress,

And the loss they'll lament, too, as long as
they live,

Of the grace and the wisdom they used to
possess,

And all the grave dignity spectacles give.

"My learned friend says they are made
with a straddle :

But what does this prove? though the fact
may be so ;

Does the horse or the ass claim the right to
the saddle,

Because it fits close to his back? surely no !

Again ; would your lordship a moment suppose

(Tis a case that has happened, and may
be again)

That the visage or countenance had not a
nose?—

Pray who could, or who would, wear spectacles
then?

On the whole, it appears, and my argument
shews,

With a reasoning the court will never
condemn,

That the spectacles plainly were made for
the Nose,

And the Nose was as plainly intended for
them.

Then shifting his side, as a lawyer knows how,

He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes ;

But what were his arguments few people
know,

For the court did not think they were
equally wise.

So his lordship decreed with a grave solemn
note,

Decisive and clear, without one if or but,
That, whenever the Nose put his spectacles on,
By day-light or candle-light, eyes should be
shut.

"Let your lordship imagine no eyes to a
face

(For my learned friend's instance is here
just inverted),

Are spectacles worn or put on in this case?

Not a nose in all Europe would dare to
assert it.

"That my client the Eyes may give way
to a nap

With the spectacles on, is past all contradiction ;

But your lordship must see, this occurs
through mishap :

That they're wilfully closed, is my learned
friend's fiction.

"Will your lordship but turn to 5th Edward
the Third—

An act which undoubtedly settles the
question,

And which shews that new trials were
granted and heard

Of less moment than this, and less weighty
digestion.

"Before I conclude, I appeal to the court—

And your lordship will surely my argument
grant—

That the action commenced through an en-
vious retort ;

For the Nose, as a nose, cannot spectacles
want."

So his lordship cried hem ! and then stroked
down his face ;

And when all the court re-considered it
o'er,

They wished well to the plaintiff, they pitied
his case,

But could grant no new trial the cause to
restore.

Yet, to make up all difference, his lord-
ship proposed—

That Eyes in this case no advantage might
lack—

"That a glass should be fixed, where the
buttons were closed,

By a ribbon suspended, blue, yellow, or
black.

"That this shall be deemed the sole right of
the Eyes,

To them and their farthest descendants
for ever,

With all the immunities thence to arise,

To quiz or to stare through, look clumsy
or clever.

REVIEW OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

REES'S *Practical Sermons*.

(Concluded from p. 52.)

THE second volume of these sermons resembles the former in its general character. It may be considered as calculated to accredit revelation in general, in the eyes of reflecting persons, and it affords occasional intimations of the nature of Gospel doctrine; while in many instances it runs counter to it. Numerous, also, are the passages which, under the appearance of candor, liberality, prudence, or moderation, afford far too much indulgence to the modern Christian, both in estimating his state before God, and in determining what ought to be the line of his practice. It is to this point that we wish now to direct the attention of our readers.

Our author was stated by us to have limited himself, in his sermon on the Sabbath, to the inculcation of the single duty of joining in public worship; and we confess that we thought he meant to make a peremptory demand upon us for an attendance of at least once a day. But in the first sermon of his second volume we find the following observation, which, as we think, is but too indicative of the low standard both of moral practice and of devotional feeling with which the class of divines, to which Dr. Rees may be considered as belonging, are apt to be satisfied.

"Candour inclines us to hope, that, amongst those who pay no regard to the external forms of religion, there are many who do not renounce its principles; and that they are Christians in their *judgment and general practice*, although, for reasons best known to themselves, and which it is beside our present purpose to investigate, they neglect to attend the public institutions, and to perform the social duties of Christians."

He adds, indeed, that the faith of such persons will be liable to sus-

picion and reproach, &c.;—a softness of censure but little adapted to so serious an omission, but which he was probably led to adopt by the unwillingness he states himself to feel, "to form a very unfavourable opinion of the religious sentiments of the multitude;" though upon what ground, either of Scripture or experience, he has formed a favourable opinion of them, we must own ourselves at some loss even to conjecture. It is but justice to Dr. Rees, however, to add, that the same sermon contains the following important observation.

"In the long enjoyment of unmolested tranquillity and freedom, the attention of the multitude has not been sufficiently directed to moral and religious subjects. The principles that have been transmitted to them from their ancestors, they have not duly examined. The grounds of the profession assumed by them, they have not duly investigated. They have neglected to cultivate that sense of the importance of religion which is necessary to direct their determination and to influence their conduct. Having never been called forth to any trial, they have thought it needless to fortify their minds by just sentiments of religious truth and duty; and dreading the reproach of that zeal, which, though sometimes erroneous and excessive, distinguished their progenitors in former days, they have deviated into the other extreme of heedlessness and indifference. Every kind of profession, so unlimited and indiscriminating has been their liberality, has appeared to them of equal importance; and from these lax sentiments they have, in some cases, been led altogether to renounce the profession of religion, under any of those forms or modes in which it is exercised. Has not this been the progress of declension in instances that must have fallen under our own observation, till it has terminated in utter apostacy? The want of discrimination has produced that kind of indifference, which has been succeeded by casual and inconstant attendance on the public institutions of religion, and which has gradually reconciled the mind to a total desertion of them." pp. 7, 8.

We were glad to perceive, in this discourse, the mention of the "infallible directions of the word" of God; an expression which may, we hope, be construed to imply that there is not a disposition in Dr. Rees to adopt the licence so common with many other unitarians in respect to the sacred text.

The uses of subordination in society, and the duty of being candid in our construction of the conduct of our rulers, are among the subjects which Dr. Rees has incidentally touched.

In a sermon on Perseverance in the Profession of Christianity (at pp. 32 and 33), we were pleased to find a profession of the author's faith, approaching more nearly to the language of orthodox Christians than the general tenor of his sermons would lead us to expect.

"Jesus Christ," he says, "is the way, the truth, and the life; or the true way to eternal life." "With Jesus Christ, endeared and honoured name! beloved and revered character! are the words of eternal life:—With him, who admirably combines the offices of a Teacher and Saviour; who, by the expiation of his death, cancels the guilt of the penitent transgressor; who, by the influence of a divine Spirit, imparts needful succour to the upright and humble; who annexes, by a covenant of mercy, sanctioned and sealed by his precious blood, the reward of eternal life to an imperfect obedience. To whom shall we go for complete satisfaction, notwithstanding our demerit and frailty, but to him who assures us of pardon and assistance; who rescues us from sin and death; and who confers a recompence on the believing and upright, to which innocence could have no claim? To whom, indeed, can we go, with confidence of success, and urged by our solicitude, to obtain eternal life, but to him, whom the Father of mercies has invested with the office of a Mediator, and whom he has ordained to be the resurrection and the life?" pp. 32, 33.

Dr. Rees proceeds, in the next sermon, once more to bewail the prevailing neglect of Christian worship; but he is again so soft in his censures, and so lax and liberal in his admissions, that we fear his remarks would do but little to cure the

evil of which he complains. The "benign effect produced by Christianity on the first Christians;" their gratitude to God; their condescension and liberality to their more destitute brethren; and their peace and joy sweetening every social repast, and sanctifying even their most common blessings, are well described in the 54th page. Our author, however, presses much too strongly the circumstance of their having favour with all the people, when he goes on to say—"Nor has there existed a nation or age so degenerate, as to withhold the tribute of respect and applause from persons of a similar character." The truth seems to be, that real Christians go through both "evil report and good report;" and that though it depends much on circumstances of time and place what shall be the estimation in which they are held, yet, generally speaking, "the world loveth its own;" and as their Master, though he was said at one period to be in favour with God and man, and at another to have been hailed by the Hosannahs of the multitude, was, on the whole, "despised and rejected of man," so "the servant, in this respect, is not above his Lord." If they called the Master of the house Beelzebub, it seems to follow that some unfair accusation, some unfavourable surmise, some nickname, is not unlikely to fall upon his faithful followers in every succeeding age.

"Victory over the world," says our author, in his sermon on the text—"this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith"—"does not consist in abstinence from its innocent amusements and pleasures." Certainly not from its *innocent* amusements and pleasures; but we have no definition of what is here meant by the word *innocent*, and little assistance in forming a Christian judgment on the point.

We have sometimes indulged the hope that the philosophic world would, in a certain degree, unite with the Christian world, in denounc-

ing the system of dissipation and frivolity which characterises so many of the higher and richer order of men in the present day; and we have not been altogether disappointed. Dr. Rees, however, is, as usual, much too lax on this subject, or at least too little pointed and specific. Among persons reputed to be of what is called the evangelical school, who are by far the strictest men in matters of this sort, there is—we are sorry to remark it—a growing assimilation to the world. The younger part of them are desirous to see with their own eyes what is that pride of life which their parents had instructed them to renounce, and to purchase, by their own experience, a pretty ample acquaintance with that folly and vanity which one would think that either piety or good sense would quickly teach them to disdain. When Dionysius, the tyrant of Syracuse, invited Plato to come and witness the splendor and festivity of his court, the Grecian sage replied, “Philosophy will not allow Plato to visit Dionysius.” He had before been betrayed into one visit, and had then been wearied with those exhibitions which were the delight of dull and ordinary minds. He had, moreover, his own pursuits at Athens; and in these he was most eagerly, as well as pleasantly, engaged. Now the true and consistent Christian has as little taste for frivolous amusement and gaudy shew as the philosopher; and he also has his Athens, his scene of useful and regular occupation, which he has too much dignity to quit at the call even of those kings and queens of the world of fashion who sometimes condescend, in acknowledgment of his merit, to invite him from his supposed obscurity into their shining circles.

We object to the following words in this discourse: “Whatsoever is born of God, that is, *every true Christian*, overcometh the world.” He that is born of God is undoubtedly a true Christian; but the expression, “to be born of God,” is

one which demanded explanation. By disposing of it in this sententious manner, the strong doctrinal meaning which it was intended to convey is evaded. All classes of religionists are apt too easily to regard themselves as *true Christians*; and to substitute their assumption of this high and sacred name, for that “new creation,” that renewal of the soul in the divine image, that resurrection from the death of sin to a life of righteousness, which the term “born of God” is meant in Scripture to imply, and without which no one is entitled to consider himself as a true Christian. The doctrinal system of Dr. Rees required, however, that this strong and pointed expression should be sunk in some “barren generality.” It may be said, that our criticism on this point ought to be disarmed by a subsequent remark, that “Christianity assures us of divine succour in obtaining a victory over the world, and that a divine energy shall invigorate the feeble resolutions of the upright.” We complain, however, that this observation also is extremely brief, and altogether unsatisfactory. It falls every way short of the emphatical declaration of the apostle; a declaration which immediately precedes, and directly bears upon, the text prefixed to the sermon.

In the beginning of the following passage of the sermon on Victory over Death, the preacher accredits himself to us as a fair interpreter of Scripture. He sadly falls off from his orthodoxy before he arrives at the conclusion of it; his mind evidently reverting to the unfounded distinction which we have already endeavoured to expose (see p. 46, et seq.) between those who are saved through repentance, and those whom he denominates the uniformly obedient.

“The strength of sin (says the apostle) is the law. This requires perfect obedience, and makes no provision for the pardon of transgressors. Our blessed Lord delivers those who believe in and obey him from its condemning sentence; and he has estab-

blished a covenant of pardon and favour, which connects not only indemnity, but eternal life, with repentance and sincerity. For this purpose he offered up his life as a propitiatory sacrifice to God; and thus maintained the authority and honour of the law, whilst those who could not be acquitted from the violation of it were admitted to share the tokens of divine forgiveness and the glorious recompence of a happy immortality." p. 114.

The sermon on the Conduct of Christ in declining Honour from Men, contains many good observations; but enfeebled, as usual, by the laxity of his admissions, and the largeness of his qualifications. For instance, the author, when pressing the example of our Lord, need not surely have said quite so much to us about "paying a due regard to the opinion of the world, &c." We are most of us sufficiently prone to err on that side.

In page 170, it is fair to remark, that it is said to be the "declared object of our Saviour's divine mission to seek and to save them that were lost. Such," it is added, "is the humbling representation which the New Testament gives us of the general state of mankind; and it is no less just than abasing." He goes on to speak of our *degeneracy* and guilt, &c.; meaning, however, as we conceive, not that we have degenerated from that state in which Adam originally was created, but from that in which we ourselves naturally are. But putting even this construction on his expressions, we are still at a loss in reconciling the commencement of this passage with the general tenor of our author's language on this subject.

In the sermon on Flattery, and indeed in various parts of these volumes, Dr. Rees assumes that much less opposition to the world is necessary than both Scripture and experience prove to be demanded of us. It is surely not enough to say, with our author, that "it is dangerous to be influenced by too warm an attachment to the good opinion and approbation of the multitude."

"Ye adulterers and adulteresses," exclaimed the apostle, "know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity against God. Whosoever, therefore, will be the friend of the world, is the enemy of God."—In the sequel of this sermon, however, as in many other places, partial, though certainly very inadequate, compensation is made for the fault which is committed; and the severity of the orthodox critic is thus continually softened, if not disarmed.

We wish that this writer had not only touched, as he does in treating of a placable temper, "on the barbarous practice of duels, which," he says, "is a disgrace to modern manners in a polished and Christian nation;" but had also laid the axe to the root of this evil, by exposing the weakness of that argument by which the generality of men now defend their own disposition to countenance and continue this unchristian and absurd method of terminating disputes. They profess to lament the custom, and to dislike the barbarity of it. But, they add, it is necessary to comply, for the sake of our reputation. We shall be degraded in society, say they, if we decline the combat, when the laws of honour call us forth; and if thus dishonoured, we shall become both miserable and useless. We fight, therefore, not because we are of an implacable temper, but in defence of our reputation, the protection of which is a part of general self-preservation. It is obvious, from this statement, that the true practical mode of inducing any individual to decline a duel, is to deliver him from his subjection to the opinion of his fellow-creatures.—That sermon of Dr. Rees, in which he speaks of our Saviour as not seeking honour from men, and exhorts us (though, as we before remarked, too feebly and guardedly) to follow his example, might have afforded no improper place for an answer to the plea of the modern duellist.

But it is time to conclude this long

review. There is, however, one discourse, towards the end of the second volume, to which, before we close this article, we feel ourselves called upon particularly to advert.

The title is, "the Excellence of the Human Frame and Faculties." Man is here contemplated "in his corporeal frame; in his intellectual faculties; in his moral principles; in his social affections; in his capacity of progressive improvement, and in his destination for immortality." The text is, "For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." We select, first, the following passage, which occurs under the second head; and which, though it contains nothing that is new, will furnish an example of the author's method of philosophising on some parts of this interesting subject.

"It is needless now to enter into any discussion concerning the nature of the human soul. Whilst others, however, strenuously contend, that it is no distinct principle of the human frame; that it results from a peculiar organization of matter; and that the doctrine of the soul has been the source of many errors among philosophers and divines: we may be allowed to say, that these assertions are much more easily made than proved; and that both reason and Scripture seem to furnish very decisive and satisfactory evidence in favour of the doctrine, which some consider as almost antiquated, and which it is very fashionable to exclude. To me, indeed, the existence of spirit is as easily conceivable as that of matter: and we might as readily dispense with the one as the other. Both are known alike, merely by their properties; their properties are equally discernible; and they seem to be perfectly distinct, and indeed incompatible with each other. That the thinking principle should be material is, I confess, a dogma in philosophy, which surpasses my comprehension. That thought, and will, and consciousness should be properties of matter, which is an inert, inactive, and divisible mass, itself incapable of beginning, continuing, or changing motion; and that any modification or refinement of matter should produce mental powers and exercises, are propositions, which, however allowed by others, cannot command my assent. Of the existence of one spirit, the source of all be-

ing, spiritual or material, and of his action on matter, without any common properties, we are all convinced; and whilst we allow the Deity to be immaterial, many of the difficulties that attend the doctrine of a separate spirit in man are capable of being satisfactorily resolved." pp. 396, 397.

Our readers will also be pleased with the following quotation:—

"Consider again the capacity of progressive improvement which pertains to our intellectual and moral nature. That man possesses such a capacity needs no proof. Other creatures arrive much sooner at maturity; but the progress of human beings, though more slow and gradual, indicates gradations of improvement, that have no limit and no end. Compare then the plant that springs up, and buds, and blossoms, and withers in a short period, with the monarch of the forest, the pride of Britain, the long-lived oak; or the insect of a day, with animals of a much longer duration; and say, to which of these the preference is due? Judging of excellence by analogy, is not man, who is progressive in mental and moral improvement whilst he lives, and who does not arrive at maturity within the term of the most prolonged life, proportionably excellent and eminent? At what attainments in knowledge and even in religious virtue have some distinguished characters arrived? What angelic spirits have inhabited some human bodies? And if men, eminent for their knowledge and goodness, are even now but *little lower than the angels*: what may we conceive them to be? How high their rank! how illustrious their improvement! and how proportionably signal their honour and felicity, in that scene of unlimited progress and advancement which lies before them? If in the school of the world, where they occupy, as it were, the lowest form of education and discipline; where they are in a state of minority; where they meet with many hindrances, and where they labour under many disadvantages, they make so considerable a proficiency: what may not be expected, when mortality is swallowed up of life; when their faculties have acquired vigour; when their graces are matured and established; and where, among kindred spirits, they will have every motive to excite their emulation, and every advantage for advancing from one degree of excellence to another through unceasing ages? In this capacity of boundless improvement more than in any improvement actually made; in these earnest and promises of unknown and inconceivable proficiency in knowledge and

holiness, when time is no more, and eternity has commenced; we discern the lustre and glory, which the Creator has impressed upon our frame: and we may well say, *thou hast crowned us with glory and honour.*" pp. 405—407.

But we now turn back to the introductory part of this discourse. Here the author professes his disbelief that "human beings are introduced into life in those circumstances of moral depravity and guilt which some have supposed;" a doctrine, he says, which, if true, would render "the continuance of the species a calamity much to be deplored."

"We might," he proceeds to say, "be ready to suspect our derivation from God, a holy and good Being, if we were corrupt and guilty to the degree which some have represented in our original formation. If children, before they have done either good or evil, are obnoxious to the Divine wrath by inherent depravity or the imputation of guilt, we should regard every infant that is born into the world, not merely with compassion, but with horror; bewail his hapless destiny, and incline almost to wish that the succession of one generation after another might speedily terminate.

"As it is a false humility which leads men, in any case, to think themselves worse than they really are; this humility becomes culpable, when it disposes them to reproach and vilify that nature, which they derive from God, and which is transmitted, by a constitution which he has ordained, and which his providence perpetuates. With very different sentiments does the declaration of the text, in perfect unison with the whole doctrine of Scripture on this subject, lead us to contemplate our frame and state. When the psalmist is surveying the variety of the divine works, and devoutly acknowledging the condescension of the divine regards to mankind; he directs his views to our original formation, and to the rank we occupy in the universe, as affording additional incitements to veneration and gratitude. He does not recur to any popular declamation on the corruption and degeneracy of human nature, in order to heighten his ideas of the divine goodness; but he derives, from the dignity and honour, which the Creator has conferred on man, motives to admire and to celebrate his benevolence and condescension. *Thou, says he, in his grateful address to God, hast made him a*

little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." pp. 390, 391.

The sentiments which the author here explicitly avows have been indicated in various parts of these volumes; indeed, they lie at the foundation of his system. We are at issue with him on the subject of the corruption of our nature; and, after the running combat which we have hitherto thought it sufficient to maintain, we are not sorry to have an opportunity of encountering him in what he evidently considers as his strong hold, before we terminate our labour.

One answer which we give to all "popular declamations" against "the corruption of human nature" (for surely the denial of our corruption is, generally speaking, as popular as the assertion of it), is this: that the subject ought not to be separated, as it too often is, and as we find it to be in this place, from the doctrine of the redemption of man by Jesus Christ. What we affirm is, not only that man is corrupt and fallen; that he inherits a sinful nature from his first parents, and is in every sense "obnoxious to the divine wrath,"—not only that "in Adam all die"—but also that "*in Christ shall all be made alive.*" We say, indeed, that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (death spiritual, as well as temporal); "and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;"—but we immediately add, that Christ is become a second Adam; and that "as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We also triumphantly exclaim, with the apostle, that "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound;" and that "as sin hath reigned unto death, even so grace now reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." This combined view of our fall in Adam, and of our redemption by Christ, completely relieves the gloom with which our author had invested

his insulated subject; and we take this occasion of complaining of the unfairness and disingenuousness of all those arguments against certain points in the orthodox faith which leave out of consideration other corrective parts of the system. Our author doubtless is no stranger to the doctrine of compensation, as applied to the works of nature. He knows, that (as Dr. Paley, in his book on Natural Theology, has remarked) the structure which qualifies an organ of the body to answer one important purpose, may necessarily unfit it for some other, but that, through the consummate wisdom of the Great Architect, the apparent evil is removed, or the deficiency is supplied, by some compensatory principle which perhaps escapes the inattentive observer. There is an analogy between the divine operations in nature and in grace.

But the great question is, Whether man, in point of fact, is or is not so corrupt, as we old-fashioned and orthodox followers of the church are disposed to paint him? For undoubtedly it would be an error and heresy in religion to describe him as other than he really is, for the sake of any supposed good to himself, or glory to his Redeemer. Here, first, let us remark, by the way, that man is admitted by our adversaries to be not quite perfect. He is not, according even to them, of the sinless order of angels. Now, proceeding on the ground of their own most moderate admission, it is presumable that he will be disposed to under-rate the degree of his departure from what is right; for where was there ever a transgressor who was willing to see clearly the whole extent of his transgression? What sinner is not desirous to palliate one part of his crime, and deny another; is not slow in his admissions, and ingenious in his excuses? "The heart of man," says the Scripture, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know

it?" Mental blindness seems inseparable from moral corruption.

Consider, next, the proof of man's disposition to evil, which is afforded by the state of the world around us. Who, that is acquainted with history—who, we mean, that has also a quick moral feeling—does not turn with disgust from the almost unvarying scenes either of force or fraud which it records? Who, that has travelled in foreign parts, is not struck the depravity of both the country and the court? Who, that has attended to the condition of even our own favoured land, so as to "know the world," as it is called, does not feel a strong conviction of the corruption of mankind force itself on his mind? Who, therefore, does not lay aside his theory of the goodness of our nature, when he proceeds to act; or even when he philosophizes, in the only way in which men are now agreed that we ought to philosophize, namely, by reasoning, not from what we think ought to be, to what is, but from experience? But "man is *degenerate*," says Dr. Rees. This term frequently occurs in his discourses. It means, as we presume, that he has corrupted himself. Doubtless he has done so. Does not, however, this, his so common habit of corrupting himself, afford a presumption of some antecedent disposition to the corruption? If the dice continually turn up in one manner, who does not suspect that they are loaded? Or if the bowl always roll towards a particular side, who does not infer that there is a bias belonging to it? Are we, then, irrational in religion, when we affirm that the actual corruption of the world constitutes an argument on the side of that doctrine of original sin which our church affirms; a doctrine which the Scriptures (as we think, though we shall not now dwell on that point) plainly establish; and of which Dr. Rees, nevertheless, can perceive no trace in the sacred volume.

But let us touch briefly on the nature of that kind of goodness which is described in the Gospel. The Scriptures denounce many things as evil, which, in ordinary eyes, are morally good; and they give to man no credit for that virtue which consists in the act, rather than the intention. Now more than half of what men call virtue, is forced upon them. It is the result of a reluctant compromise of their jarring interests. Each departs from that unreasonable claim which he is in his heart disposed to urge, because he finds a multitude of other unreasonable claims no less forcibly pressed by his competitors. Many beneficial consequences follow from this happy adjustment of our contending interests. But God awards to us no praise for the actions thus produced. It has pleased him so to form the world, that the very wrath of man shall praise him; that vice shall often serve to controul vice, and evil produce incidental good. But we learn from his holy word, that, in estimating the character of each individual man, it is the heart only that he regards; and that every deviation of the internal thought from what is right, is in his account sin. "If our hands," says the pious Hooker, "did never offer violence to our brethren, a bloody thought doth prove us murderers before him; if we had never opened our mouth to utter any scandalous, offensive, or hurtful word, the cry of our secret cogitations is heard in the ears of God. If we did not commit the sins which daily and hourly, either in deed, word, or thought, we do commit; yet, in the good things which we do, how many defects are there intermingled? God, in that which is done, respecteth the mind and intention of the doer. Cut off, then, all those things wherein we have regarded our own glory, those things which men do to please men, and to satisfy their own liking; those things which we do for any by-respect, not sincerely and purely

for the love of God; and a small score will serve for the number of our righteous deeds. Let the holiest and best things which we do be considered. We are never better affected unto God than when we pray: yet, when we pray, how are our affections many times distracted! how little reverence do we shew unto the grand majesty of God, unto whom we speak! how little remorse of our own miseries, how little taste of the sweet influence of his tender mercies, do we feel! It may seem somewhat extreme which I will speak; therefore let every one judge of it even as his own heart shall tell him, and no otherwise: I will but only make a demand: If God should yield unto us, not as unto *Abraham*;—if fifty, forty, thirty, twenty, yea, or if ten good persons could be found in a city, for their sakes this city should not be destroyed: But, and if he should make us an offer thus large;—search all the generations of men, since the fall of our father Adam; find one man that hath done one action, which hath past from him pure, without any stain or blemish at all; and for that one man's only action neither man nor angel shall feel the torments which are prepared for both:—Do you think that this ransom, to deliver men and angels, could be found among the sons of men? The best things which we do have somewhat in them to be pardoned: how, then, can we do any thing meritorious or worthy to be rewarded? Indeed, God doth liberally promise whatsoever appertaineth to a blessed life, to as many as sincerely keep his law, though they be not exactly able to keep it: wherefore we acknowledge a dutiful necessity of doing well; but the meritorious dignity of doing well we utterly renounce."

It is to this idea of the meritorious dignity of doing well, that our author, as we think, is continually inclining. He speaks indeed of salvation by Christ, and even of the sa-

tisfaction for sin which he made by his death. Such, nevertheless, is the general tenor of his sermons, that divine mercy appears to have little part in the redemption of which he treats. Heaven seems to be purchased rather by us than for us. The man who, in his own account, has not led an immoral life, is taught to imagine himself *rectus in curia* when he stands at the bar of the Divine Justice. The terms self-complacency and self-approbation so often occur; repentance is so little dwelt upon, and so partially urged; human guilt is so feebly painted, except in the case of a few reprobates; and humility and poverty of spirit are so little characteristic of his Gospel; that we cannot help repeating, before we conclude, that we consider his sermons as fundamentally defective and erroneous. And who can wonder that a system which too little abases man should fail sufficiently to exalt Jesus Christ? We account Dr. Rees's indisposition to receive the doctrine of the Divinity of our Saviour to be an error of the same family with those which we have just described; and we also connect the laxity of many of his scattered opinions on practical matters, as well as the want of spirituality and comprehensiveness, which is observable in his view of Christian ethics, with the general system of his theology. We have observed that he is too favourable to the principle of acting from a regard to reputation; that he supposes piety to be more honoured in the world than it is usually found to be by its true votaries; that he is by no means sufficiently strict in guarding men on the subject of amusements; that he says too little in favour of the religious observance of the Sabbath; and, above all, that he fails sufficiently to urge the radical and important difference between a virtuous or orderly, and a truly religious practice; between that species of morality which, under certain happy circumstances, may happen to adorn some of the children of this

world, and that habitual piety and spirituality of mind which are among the characteristic properties of true Christian virtue.

It is proper here to add, that we trace, in various parts of these volumes, an evident disposition to present a partial view of certain scriptural subjects. Quotations occasionally appear which proclaim the general dignity of Jesus Christ; but those which specially point at his Divinity are left out. The happiness of the blessed is often affirmed, in Scripture language, to be eternal; and in one place it is observed of a wicked and impenitent man, that it would have been better for him never to have been born: but we hear nothing of those terms which the Scripture has coupled with the mention of eternal life, nothing of going away into everlasting punishment, nothing of "the worm which never dieth, and of the fire which is not quenched." We are frequently gratified by the recurrence of the expressions in the Revelation, which speak of those who are saved as "a great multitude which no man can number" — "out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation;" but we are not told at any time that "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The subject of the Evil Spirit is never mentioned. There is an evident design to modify, if not to suppress, the more mysterious as well as the sterner and more unwelcome truths of the Gospel. There are probably few persons who have not been sometimes tempted to indulge in a similar partiality of representation; but the humble Christian will stand corrected by the reflection, that God is wiser, and on the whole infinitely more merciful, than man; and that the duty principally "required of stewards" of "the mysteries of God," is to be found faithful.

It will be perceived, that our object, in this long review, has not been simply to dwell on the doctri-

nal opinions of Dr. Rees : these, indeed, he has forborne to make prominent : but let us not be misled by this circumstance. We have not been *eager* to prefer against him a charge of heresy because his religion (to borrow an expression of a panegyrist of these sermons *) does not "bear the hall-mark of modern orthodoxy." We have rather wished to explain at large what we conceive to be the fault of its general character and spirit ; and we have been at the same time anxious both to do justice to the talents of the author, and to give a fair view of his religious system. We certainly do not think him liable to *all* those imputations which are perhaps too indiscriminately cast on the unitarian body. We conceive him not to be a Socinian, nor even an Arian of the more latitudinarian cast. Both Socinianism and Arianism have their several degrees ; and, if we may judge from the definitions of those terms given in Dr. Rees's own Cyclopædia, there is an extreme diversity in the opinions of men coming under each of these denominations. One great error of them all, is that which we have endeavoured to point out ; the error of over-estimating man's goodness, and of undervaluing the Divine mercy ; of trusting in something which we ourselves have done, rather than in the satisfaction for sin made by Jesus Christ ; of looking only to our own efforts for the amelioration of our character, not to the grace of God and the influence of his Holy Spirit. This error, we may add, is natural to us all. We are effectually driven from it only by a painful and feeling sense, first, of our own actual sins and multiplied transgressions in thought, word, and deed ; and then of that corruption of our very heart, from which we discover that they have proceeded ; and by the acquisition of new ideas of the purity as well as reasonableness of that divine law which we have been so prone to violate. Even in this great particular, therefore, we do not accuse Dr.

* Monthly Reviewer.

Rees of any very extraordinary heterodoxy, when compared with other divines of the same class : even we consider him, on account of his professing himself a dissenter, to be far more respectable than some teachers of the church, not unlike himself, who, at the very time when they have been eating her bread, have been lifting up their heel against her. —We allude to such men as Mr. Blackburn, Mr. Fellowes, Mr. Stone, &c. &c.—Dr. Rees has given consistency to the practical error of which we have last spoken, by the turn of all his doctrinal opinions. Not a few members of our church, however, cherish a similar error, without adopting his doctrinal tenets ; Trinitarians in their creed, they remain of the self-same spirit. Happily, also, the doctor, though for the most part systematically and consistently wrong, occasionally differs from himself ; and he not seldom rises above his system.

After all, we cannot conscientiously recommend these sermons to general perusal ; for although they possess considerable claims to distinction, on the ground of their intellectual superiority ; and although they contain many passages which are entitled to a still higher kind of praise, as being calculated to recommend religion generally to the approbation and esteem of mankind ; yet, on the whole, they are lamentably defective. They neither acquaint us with the nature of our moral disease, nor point out to us the true means of our recovery. The Christian, whose principles are firmly fixed, we admit, may read them with advantage. He will find much in them to enlarge and elevate his mind. But the errors which they either inculcate or countenance are so important, that we should be afraid, in most other cases, lest their influence should be very prejudicial.

After the most deliberate consideration which we have been able to give to the word of God, and many years of not inattentive observation of what is passing in the world

around us, we have attained to a full conviction, that a right view of the state of man, as a sinner before God, lies very much at the root of genuine piety, and is indispensably necessary to its growth and maturity at least, if not also to its existence. We cannot, therefore, contemplate without regret, a work, however respectable, the tendency of which appears to us to be, to accredit views respecting the condition and character of man, and his relation to God, which are fundamentally erroneous.

We are far from meaning to affirm, that all whose opinions on this point are orthodox are therefore pious. It must be allowed that there are many in the present day, and similar instances were not wanting in the days of the apostles, who, in various senses of the term, "hold the truth in unrighteousness;" who, though prompt to confess their corruption, weakness, and danger, are nevertheless apt to remain satisfied with the barren acknowledgment, without any cordial efforts to work out their salvation, without any earnest applications for that grace which is to subdue their corruptions, strengthen their weakness, and save them from the wrath to come.

But while we are compelled, by a regard to truth, to make this large admission, we must at the same time express our apprehensions (and it is a point which deserves the attentive consideration of all who adopt the principles of the unitarian school), that there are few, if any, individuals who have embraced our author's views of human nature, to whom, if we are to judge by their spirit, temper, conduct, and conversation, those expressions of Scripture, which peculiarly designate the true followers of Jesus Christ appear manifestly to belong*. What is the description given of these in the Bible? They are "born of God;" they are "partakers of the Divine nature;"

* See this subject treated at large, and with distinguished ability, in Fuller's *Work on Socinianism*.

they "love not the world, neither the things that are in the world;" they "are not conformed to the world;" they "overcome the world" by their faith; "the world is crucified unto them, and they unto the world," by the cross of Christ; they are "spiritually-minded;" "the word of Christ dwells in them richly;" "they do all in the name of the Lord Jesus;" "the mind is in them which was also in Christ Jesus;" "Christ is their life," "he dwells in their hearts by faith;" they are "filled with all joy and peace in believing," and "abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost;" "the love of Christ constrains them" to "live not to themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again;" and "the life which they now live in the flesh they live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them and gave himself for them;" "they are led by the Spirit," and "walk in the Spirit;" they "set their affections on things above;" "their conversation is in heaven, from whence also they look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus;" "they count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ," &c. &c. Now while we confess, that, even of those whose professed principles on the point in question are the most consonant to what we believe to be the truth, there is but a small proportion to whom the above language can be fairly applied. We must also affirm, that it has been almost exclusively, if not solely, among such as profess those principles, that the few have been found with whose character the above delineations have corresponded? And the history of the church in all ages seems to us to prove, that those who have been most eminent for their piety, and for their progress in the divine life, have been proportionably distinguished by a deep and affecting sense of their own native corruption.

It may possibly be thought, by some of our readers, that we have been too severe on Dr. Rees, especially as to the last sermon which

we have noticed; inasmuch as he may not have intended to pass any strong censure on those advocates for the doctrine of our corruption who describe it in somewhat measured terms, and do not represent any portion of mankind as under an unavoidable sentence of reprobation. We are most willing to concede to Dr. Rees, that the depravity of man ought not to be confounded, as it sometimes is, with that of devils, and that we possess some natural sense (though it is a most imperfect one) of good and evil. We also admit, or rather we contend, that man is a voluntary agent. Nor have we much objection to what he says, in the body of this discourse, of the moral principles of man; a term by which he seems principally to mean that he is a responsible creature, and has faculties capable of being applied to religious and moral uses, leaving in a great measure untouched the question whether he so applies them. Still we affirm, and we do it in the language of our church, that he is "very far gone from original righteousness," and that he has no power to do good works, without the grace of God both preventing and working with him.—To the doctrine of the inability of man, we would, however, apply exactly the same remark which we made in speaking of his corruption:—it is not to be contemplated alone. Are we all guilty, and "under the curse of the law?" "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Are we weak? "The Spirit helpeth our infirmities." "When we are weak, then are we strong." "We can do all things through Christ, that strengtheneth us." A compensatory doctrine is supplied in both cases, and care undoubtedly should be taken not to destroy, or even weaken, its efficacy, by our manner of interpreting and applying it.—We further allow, that antinomianism, as well as enthusiasm, may have been spread in many quarters through a

rash, and somewhat erroneous, mode of proclaiming the very doctrines for which we so strenuously contend. Dr. Rees, therefore, if he had limited his animadversions, might have had our thanks; but his language extends itself to the mass both of orthodox dissenters, and of those whom we deem the sound and orthodox members of our church. He also does not sufficiently consider that a certain portion of enthusiasm, and even of speculative antinomianism, may be detected in persons who, on the whole, are subjects for approbation rather than censure. We have found ourselves repeatedly called upon to defend the more general character of that large and mixed body of men who are now commonly called the evangelical world (comprehending not only the evangelical churchman, but the evangelical dissenter and methodist), whose faults, nevertheless, we have deemed it to be no less our duty occasionally to point out. The question between us and the adversaries of this body has been, not, as those adversaries assume, whether enthusiasm or antinomianism ought to be encouraged, but whether certain persons among them who may be tinctured with these faults, and some of them, as we trust, but slightly, should not be sheltered from the violence of their enemies:—and whether, also, the evangelical body, to which indeed some of the wildest of our sectaries can scarcely be said to belong, ought not to be upheld, and even highly accredited, on the ground of the unquestionable piety of their general character, and the pre-eminent usefulness of their labours. We trust that we have shewn, in the course of the present paper, that we can perceive what is worthy of approbation even in those separatists who are of the unitarian party, and can exercise candour towards them; but surely we may be allowed also to indulge our charitable feelings towards those men who depart from us in a contrary direction,

and evidently partake of an enthusiastic and even antinomian spirit. We wish to be cautious how we pass an universal judgment on the mass either of our enthusiasts or unitarians; there is among them both, as we suspect, far more diversity of individual character than is commonly imagined. We can discover some things worthy to be imitated in men of both classes. We would, with all fairness, as well as kindness of spirit, present to the view of both the principles of our church, which we conceive at once to be those of Scripture, and to constitute the true centre of union. Dr. Rees is a friend to unity; but he suggests, as his means of promoting it, that men whose religious opinions are, as we think, not a little discordant, should agree to differ. We dare not imitate his liberality, if it may be so called, in this particular; but considering that all Christians are subject to the same authority of Scripture, and are also under the guidance of the same blessed Spirit, we would rather exhort them to "think the same things," and to aim to be as much as possible "of one heart and of one mind," after the example of the first believers. "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all:" let us then be ambitious that we may all come in the unity of the same Spirit, and in the knowledge of the same Son of God, "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." A right to exercise a diversity of judgments in respect to questions which concern the divinity of the Son of God, is not one of the points in which our *Christian* liberty consists. Let us not "be carried away by divers and strange doctrines, after the rudiments of this world, and not after Christ." Let us be careful especially to "hold the Head," by whom every joint is supplied, and aspire to be made "complete in Him, in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

Poems on the Abolition of the Slave Trade; written by JAMES MONTGOMERY, JAMES GRAHAME, and E. BENDER. Embellished with engravings from Pictures painted by R. Smirke, Esq. Printed for R. Bowyer, the Proprietor. London: 1809. 4to. pp. 141.

THE poet of the *Æneid*, in closing his splendid description of the triumphant combat of Hercules with the monster Cacus, mentions the transports with which the peasants of the country thronged together, to gaze on the lifeless limbs and extinguished strength of their once dreaded enemy. *Nequeunt expleri corda tuendo*; or, as the truly Virgilian translator of Virgil expresses it;

"The wond'ring neighbourhood with glad surprise

Behold his shaggy breast, his giant size,
His mouth that flames no more, and his
extinguish'd eyes."

The force which, in its living exercise, was viewed with such alarm, or felt so painfully, now becomes an interesting object of examination. Each member, too, of the group delights to recount to his neighbour, and with the minuteness of a mind relieved from fear, some instance of those destructive ravages which, at the time of their perpetration, were told of only in shrieks of anguish, or in the half-stifled and incoherent accents of consternation. Nor are voices wanting to celebrate the monster's fall, and to extol the prowess which has achieved it. The gratitude of a delivered people breaks forth in songs of praise to the conqueror; and choirs of eulogists are formed,

"—— qui carmine laudes
Herculeas et facta ferant."—

Feelings somewhat similar to these may be presumed to have given being to the publication before us. When the trade in men—a monster more terrible than the fiercest of the destroyers who fell victims to Herculean might—was finally condemned by the legislature of the

nation most intimately concerned in the support of its abominations, it was natural for all the friends of humanity and justice to meet together and to rejoice in unison. It was natural for all who felt for their brethren of mankind, in whatever latitudes situated, as for themselves—who felt for the honour of their country as for their own honour—to review with interested attention the tremendous proportions and horrid energy of the iniquity that had just been overthrown; and to celebrate, in concert, the heroes of an exploit more glorious than the most splendid of the fabled conquests of Hercules: the victory, not of force over force, but of philanthropy, conscience, reason, and religion, over bigotry, folly, avarice, barbarity, and impiety.

Of late, indeed, it grieves us to say, this system of atrocity, extinct as it was supposed to be, has exhibited some signs of reviviscence, which we cannot observe without the greatest uneasiness. Painfully anticipating its possible revival under circumstances which this country may be unable to controul, we want, we confess, that *repose* of mind on the subject, which is necessary to a reader of poetry, and which, had the work before us appeared immediately after the abolition, we should have brought to the perusal of it. At the same time, we have the satisfaction to think, that much of what was done has been effectually done; and, under the favour of Providence, the ground which yet remains may, by dint of exertion, soon be gained. We therefore do not altogether deny our hearts and sympathy to the song of triumph which the authors before us have caused to be sounded in our ears.

In presenting this splendid volume to the public, Mr. Bowyer, it seems to us, has deserved well of his country. There are, indeed, some living poets, whose names we could greatly wish to have seen blazoned on these gorgeous pages; but many fair reasons may have prevented the

publisher from applying to them on the occasion, or the application from being successful; and there is certainly here enough to gratify even those who may view the subject with less interest than it has always excited in the conductors of the *Christian Observer*.

The volume is very properly dedicated to the illustrious Patron, and to the Directors of the African Institution. The poems which it contains are three: the first entitled, "The West Indies, a Poem in four Parts," by Mr. Montgomery; the second, "Africa delivered, or the Slave Trade abolished," by Mr. Grahame; the third, simply "A Poem occasioned by the Abolition of the Slave Trade," by Mr. Benger.*

Mr. Montgomery is a writer known, as we presume, to many of our readers by some poems of his publication; but to a still greater number of them, we are afraid, by a critique which a volume of his poetry drew from a distinguished popular journal. The proscriptions, however, of this journal, which, with a sharpness worthy of its own, has been happily described as "an occasionally able and uniformly abusive work," have now become so general, that they seem no longer to be regarded as conclusive; and the ridicule which it flung on Mr. Montgomery, though in some respects well directed, has not, we conceive, materially affected his credit with those who were previously acquainted with his works. The style of this poet, indeed, we consider to be ex-

* We have said Mr. Benger; but E. Benger, which is all that this publication says of the writer in question, may be the name of a lady. As, in such a case of doubt, the ambiguous person ought to be supposed of the nobler sex, we hesitated, from a feeling of gallantry, before we assigned our own to E. Benger. But, foreseeing that, if we did otherwise, we should be exposed to a further perplexity between Mrs. and Miss Benger, we suffered our indolence to decide the question. For which offence we hereby apologise to all our fair readers.

actly of that sort, which is apt to provoke much more ridicule than it deserves. It is not a style content with safe correctness. It hazards much, and consequently we need not wonder that it not seldom fails, and sometimes, perhaps, fails lamentably. But he must be either a very ill-natured or a very silly observer, who, in criticism, or in any other pursuit whatever, busies himself in counting and exposing the failures of a generous ambition, without the slightest notice of its more successful efforts. That Mr. Montgomery, with all his faults, possesses much power both of conception and of versification, every candid judge will allow; nor, indeed, is it at all derogatory of his genius as a poet, to say, what we have already intimated, that his errors are on the side of *excess*, or, in Horatian language, that they are rather *vitia* than *culpæ*.—Some specimens of his talents we shall now adduce.

The exordium of the poem strikes us as happily uniting conciseness and spirit.

“Thy chains are broken, Africa, be free!”
Thus saith the island-empress of the sea;
Thus saith Britannia.—O ye winds and waves!

Waft the glad tidings to the land of slaves;
Proclaim on Guinea's coast, by Gambia's side,

And far as Niger rolls his eastern tide
Through radiant realms beneath the burning zone,

Where Europe's curse is felt, her name unknown,

‘Thus saith Britannia, empress of the sea,
‘Thy chains are broken, Africa, be free!’

p. 1.

In the following sketch of the early exploits of the Spaniards in the Western world, there is considerable energy:

“A rabid race, fanatically bold,
And steel'd to cruelty by lust of gold,
Travers'd the waves, the unknown world explor'd,

The cross their standard, but their fight the sword;

Their steps were graves; death track'd where'er they trod;

They worshipp'd Mammon while they vow'd to God.” p. 5.

CHRIST. OBSERV. No. 98.

It may be remarked, however, of this passage, that the last line but one contains a repetition worse than superfluous. “Death track'd where'er they trod” is not only an echo, but a feeble echo, of the bold, perhaps questionably bold, enunciation of the same sentiment in the words “Their steps were graves.”

Mr. Montgomery can be pathetic as well as vigorous. In a description of the national mind of this country relenting towards Africa, we have the following lines.

“High on her rock, in solitary state,
Sublimely musing, pale Britannia sate;
Her awful forehead on her spear reclin'd,
Her robe and tresses streaming with the wind;

Chill through her frame foreboding tremors crept;

The Mother thought upon her Sons, and wept:

—She thought of Nelson in the battle slain,
And his last signal beaming o'er the main;
In Glory's circling arms the hero bled,
While Victory bound the laurel on his head;
At once immortal, in both worlds, became
His soaring spirit, and abiding name:

—She thought of Pitt, heart-broken, on his bier;

And ‘O my Country!’ echoed in her ear:

—She thought of Fox;—she heard him faintly speak,

His parting breath grew cold upon her cheek,

His dying accents trembled into air;

‘Spare injured Africa! the Negro spare!’”
p. 42.

The tribute to Mungo Park—we fear we may say, to the *memory* of Mungo Park—is extremely touching.

“—Is not the Negro blest? His generous soil

With harvest-plenty crowns his simple toil;
More than his wants his flocks and fields afford,

He loves to greet the stranger at his board:
‘The winds were roaring, and the White Man fled:

The rains of night descended on his head;
The poor White Man sat down beneath our tree,

Wearied and faint, and far from home was he:
For him no mother fills with milk the bowl,

No wife prepares the bread to cheer his soul;
—Pity the poor White Man, who sought our tree,

No wife, no mother, and no home has he.”

O

Thus sang the Negro's daughters;—once again,
O that the poor White Man might hear that strain!" p. 25.

We will next transcribe a passage of some length, and extremely characteristic of the author. It is a general picture of the natural peculiarities of Africa.

"Where the stupendous Mountains of the Moon
Cast their broad shadows o'er the realms of noon;
From rude Caffraria, where the giraffes browse,
With stately heads, among the forest boughs,
To Atlas where Numidian lions glow
With torrid fire beneath eternal snow;
From Nubian hills that hail the dawning day,
To Guinea's coast where evening fades away,
Regions immense, unsearchable, unknown,
Bask in the splendour of the solar zone;
A world of wonders,—where creation seems
No more the works of Nature but her dreams;
Great, wild, and beautiful beyond control,
She reigns in all the freedom of her soul;
Where none can check her bounty, when she show's
O'er the gay wilderness her fruits and flow'rs;
None braye her fury, when, with whirlwind-breath
And earthquake-step, she walks abroad with death;
O'er boundless plains she holds her fiery flight,
In terrible magnificence of light;
At blazing noon pursues the evening-breeze,
Through the dun gloom of realm-o'ershadowing trees;
Her thirst at Nile's mysterious fountain quells,
Or bathes her swarthy limbs where Niger swells
An inland ocean, on whose jasper rocks
With shells and sea-flower-wreaths she binds her locks:
She sleeps on isles of velvet verdure, placed
Midst sandy gulphs and shoals for ever waste;
She guides her countless flocks to cherish'd rills,
And feeds her cattle on a thousand hills;
Her steps the wild bees welcome through the vale,
From every blossom that embalms the gale;
The slow unwieldy river-horse she leads
Through the deep waters, o'er the pasturing meads;

And climbs the mountains that invade the sky
To soothe the eagle's nestlings when they cry.

At sun-set, when voracious monsters burst
From dreams of blood, awak'd by madd'ning thirst;
When the lorn caves, in which they shrink from light,
Ring with wild echoes through the hideous night;
When darkness seems alive, and all the air
Is one tremendous uproar of despair,
Horror and agony;—on her they call;
She hears their clamour, she provides for all,
Leads the light leopard on his eager way,
And goads the gaunt hyæna to his prey."

p. 13, 14.

The couplet beginning "A world of wonders," is almost alone sufficient to redeem a writer from oblivion. It is, indeed, with perhaps only one exception, the best in the poem.

It would be inexcusable in us not to add, as a very high encomium, that Mr. Montgomery may be considered as a truly Christian poet. His allusions to Christianity are by no means general, or savouring, if we may so express it, of mere *pantheism*. They respect some of its most peculiar and important doctrines. An example will, we hope, be grateful to the reader. The subject of the poet's interrogations in the following lines, is *the African*.

"Is he not Man, though knowledge never shed
Her quickening beams on his neglected head?
Is he not Man, though sweet religion's voice
Ne'er bade the mourner in his God rejoice?
Is he not man, by sin and suffering tried?
Is he not man, for whom the Saviour died?
Belie the Negro's powers:—in headlong will,
Christian! thy brother thou shalt prove him still;
Belie his virtues; since his wrongs began,
His follies and his crimes have stamp'd him Man." p. 15.

The lines which we have quoted will impress the reader, we cannot but think, with a respect for the poetic qualifications that must have conspired to produce them. At the same time those lines, though se-

lected rather as favourable examples, bear no obscure traces of the faults to which this poet is prone; for, after all, Mr. Montgomery is a somewhat faulty and unequal artist. His style of designing is grand, but wants distinctness and truth; his colouring has vividness and force, but little delicacy. Few poems of equal merit contain, in proportion to their length, a greater quantity of bombast. The imagery is violent, and occasionally even ludicrous, and the structure of the sentences often harsh and pedantic. In attempting to be great, the poet frequently becomes, not only turgid, but obscure; and when he sets about relaxing from his state of inflation, he sometimes collapses into perfect meagreness. In short, though we do not understand that he is a very young writer, what he writes has most of the characteristics of juvenile composition. We should not, we can assure Mr. Montgomery, have taken the trouble to state these objections so minutely, still less should we take, as we are about to do, the farther trouble of substantiating them by instances, had his poem, on the whole, pleased us less. Men always find the faults of those whom they esteem, the most provoking.

In the passage allusive to the noble zeal with which Las Casas protested against the Spanish cruelties in South America, a most harsh metaphor astounds the gentle reader:

"How like a prophet old Las Casas stood,
And rais'd his voice against a sea of blood,
Whose chilling waves recoil'd while he fore-
told
His country's ruin by avenging gold." p. 5, 6.

Shakespeare's *taking arms against a sea of troubles* is perfect correctness, when compared with this extravagance.

Elsewhere we are told of a colony in the West Indies, which our previous reading had never brought to our knowledge. The poet is referring to the destruction of the aboriginal Indians by the Spaniards:

"Naked and wild and ghastly lay the coasts
Furrow'd with graves, and colonized with
ghosts;" p. 12.

Which is not only bombast but inaccuracy, since it is most plain to us that these ghosts were in their mother country.

Mr. Montgomery is now and then betrayed into *prettyisms* which remind us of the Darwinian and Della-Cruscan schools. Portugal, famous for her discovery of the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, sent colonists to the New World. This simple historical fact is thus related;

"First Lusitania,—she whose prows had
borne

Her arms triumphant round the car of morn,
—Turn'd to the setting sun her bright array,
And hung her trophies o'er the couch of
day." p. 18.

Shakespeare compares mercy to *the gentle rain from heaven*. A somewhat different kind of imagery is used by our author, in his account of the gradual prevalence of right feelings respecting the Slave Trade:

"From breast to breast the flame of justice
glow'd;
—High o'er its banks the Nile of mercy
flow'd;
Through all the isle the gradual waters
swell'd;
Mammon in vain th' encircling flood repell'd;
O'erthrown at length, like Pharaoh and his
host,
His shipwreck'd hopes lay scatter'd round
the coast." p. 42.

We owe it to Mr. Montgomery, however, to say, that the passage just cited is, on the whole, the worst in his poem.

The personifications in which this writer indulges are, to say the least, extremely daring. The description, which we have already quoted with commendation, of the physical aspect and peculiarities of Africa, exhibits a splendid, but somewhat confused, picture of the operations of Nature in that quarter of the globe. The reader must have been particularly struck with the mingled audacity and impropriety of the line, in which —

we are informed of this personage that she "bathes her *swarthy* limbs where Niger swells." Why *swarthy*? Human Nature is swarthy in Africa; but the Nature that "showers o'er the gay wilderness her fruits and flowers," that "holds her fiery flight in terrible magnificence of light," or that "sleeps on isles of velvet verdure," is any thing but swarthy.

We have commended also the personification of Britannia sitting on her rock and thinking of her departed worthies. The beautiful line, "The mother thought upon her sons and wept," presents us with an image to the use of which the author seems much attached. The introduction of it, however, in one or two other parts of the poem, is not managed happily, but rather savours of quaintness and affectation. The fourth canto, for example, begins thus, without any warning:

"Was there no Mercy, mother of the Slave!
No friendly hand to succour and to save,
While Commerce thus thy captive tribes oppress'd,
And lowering Vengeance linger'd o'er the
West?" p. 35.

It would certainly not be immediately guessed that this was an apostrophe to Africa.

In one of the poems formerly published by this author, we well remember that an allegorical figure is brought on the scene, who soon finds his tongue, and states that he is *the Grave*! "The Grave (as the poet most justly but most unexpectedly adds) *who never spake before*." We hardly imagined that this strange personification would live long enough in poetry to find its counterpart; but the event has come to pass. Columbus is, in the composition before us, introduced anticipating in thought his great discovery, and resolving to venture on seas, where, as he chooses to express it,

"—peril prowls, and shipwreck lurks for
prey!" p. 4.

It has before been remarked that Mr. Montgomery is at times ob-

scure. This obscurity, in some places, results only from the defective structure of the sentence; but is more generally occasioned by over-strained attempts on the part of the author to be lofty or beautiful. Obscurity has been called a source of the sublime; it may certainly also be called an effect of the tumid. For exemplifications of the charge which we have advanced, we might refer back to some of the extracts already made, but shall rather resort afresh to the fountain-head.

"Muse! take the harp of prophecy:—behold!

The glories of a brighter age unfold:
Friends of the outcast! view th' accomplish'd plan,

The negro towering to the height of man.
The blood of Romans, Saxons, Gauls and
Danes,

Swell'd the rich fountain of the Briton's
veins;

Unmingled streams a warmer life impart,
And quicker pulses to the negro's heart:
A dusky race, beneath the evening sun,
Shall blend their spousal currents into one."

p. 43.

It cost us, we confess, some meditation to discover that this prediction related to the future intermarriages of the negroes with the whites, and to the *dusky race* which should arise from such an union.

There are, however, passages far more puzzling. The general reader, for example, would find himself greatly perplexed to understand the nature of a disorder by which the negroes are said to have often perished, and which is denominated *the earth-devouring anguish of despair*. Elsewhere the recovery of the negro from this malady is related, and in terms which excite a suspicion that his convalescence is an event not more important to the patient himself, than to the whole race of mankind; for it is there stated that he "no more—in secret agony devoured *the earth*," a piece of intelligence which might naturally be supposed to interest all the inhabitants of that planet. The notes, however, explain the mystery. The

negro slaves in the plantations sometimes destroy themselves in despair, by swallowing, not *the* earth, but simply earth. It is deplorable that a fact which, when nakedly mentioned, cannot fail powerfully to move every feeling mind, should be rendered ludicrous by the injudicious endeavours of the narrator after refinement of expression.

But we feel that, necessary as it ever is for a critic to point out freely the faults of an author of so much merit as Mr. Montgomery, a longer attention to this department of our office would insensibly draw us out of that frame of mind which we should wish always to preserve in the contemplation of a subject like the present. We shall only, therefore, follow up the censure which we have taken the liberty of hazarding on this poem, with the remark, that we attribute its exceptional qualities by no means exclusively to a defectiveness of taste in the author, but in a good measure also to the rapidity with which it was composed. It contains many lines which Mr. Montgomery, with his powers of versification, might, we are confident, have easily produced *currente calamo*, and which we therefore suspect that he did actually so produce. Two of the evidently hasty passages to which we have alluded we shall now subjoin. They are the last which we shall on this occasion extract from Mr. Montgomery's poem for the sake of censuring him.—

"For fiends, usurping human form, began
The man-degrading merchandize of man,
And death-devoted wretches were the prey,
Whose crimes had cast their heritage away,
Had forfeited for bondage, stripes and toil,
Their birthright freedom, and paternal soil.
—But keels unnumber'd as the waves that
roll

From sun to sun, or pass from pole to pole,
Since that sad hour, across the gulph have
borne

The innocent, from home and comfort torn,"

p. 16, 17.

"Gallia,—whose arms, of yore, while infant Rome
Slept in her cradle, well-nigh seal'd her doom,

(But lately laid with surer, deadlier blow
The thrones of kings, the hopes of freedom
low),

—Rush'd headlong to partake the glorious
toils,

The bold adventures, and the splendid
spoils."

p. 19.

An opportunity will occur, in the sequel of this article, of adorning our pages with another portion of the composition which we have been criticising. We shall now quit it to pay our respects to its companions.

We hail the re-appearance of the author of *the Sabbath*. Our readers also, will, we hope, receive him with a cordial welcome; but since they will receive him as an acquaintance, it is not necessary that we should expatiate on his merits at large, or state his general pretensions to their patronage. After premising, therefore, that his present poem is worthy of his fame, we shall only so far enter on the generic character of his muse, as may enable us more accurately to point out the distinguishing features which she has assumed on this occasion.

The *forte* of Mr. Grahame is well known to be *descriptive* poetry. He can reason, he can moralise, he can excel in various styles; but his favourite study is the landscape. This is his generic character. With respect to his species, he may be represented as attached less to the sublime than to the picturesque, and less to the picturesque than to the beautiful. Grand descriptions, either of the awful, or of the magnificent kind, rarely occur in his pages. Marked delineations of objects, in themselves perhaps rough and unsightly, he sometimes strikes off with great felicity, but it is chiefly for the sake of varying his pictures. His *home* is the beautiful; images, calm but not sombrous, tender but not melancholy; the peaceful flow of rural life, the quiet amiableness of domestic virtue; the cheerful devotions of modest piety. Even on these subjects, however, his manner is peculiar. He seldom *finishes*. His

drawing owes less of its effect to its general roundness and correctness, than to individual strokes of great delicacy. By a single touch, he often communicates life, and sometimes exquisite expression, to a sketch otherwise rude, or even insipid.

To the successful exertion of the qualities which we have attempted to pourtray, it is evident that the subject of the Abolition of the Slave Trade is not the most favourable. It is indeed, on the whole, of the descriptive order; but the objects of description are rather picturesque than beautiful; rather sublime than picturesque. The concentration of all the enormities both of savage and civilized life in the conduct of the trade itself, the worse than Egyptian bondage of the Middle Passage, the melancholy debasement of rational and immortal natures in the slavery of the West Indies; all furnish crowds of images too dismal to be tender; *sights of woe*, at which we are too much stunned to be sad, or, at least, at which

“——— horror drops the tear compassion drew.”

On the other side, the jubilee of resurgent Africa is a vision of accumulated glory, teeming with themes fit only for the harp of prophecy, and for lips touched with fire.

As we expected, therefore, our author is less eminent on what may be called the highway of his subject, than on particular and chosen spots. Not but that, in the description of merciless atrocity and hopeless agony, his verse has sometimes a nerve which thrills, as it were, audibly; but this is not always. The chief beauties of this poem, and they are really great, must be sought in its episodes, or in short individual passages, in which a passing allusion to some delightfully gentle, and probably rural image, comes over the reader with a refreshing sweetness. The force, however, of such passages can hardly be fully felt, except by those who light on

them in the course of reading, and have the benefit of the contrast in which they were intended to be viewed. Hence the method of making extracts, to which a reviewer is necessarily reduced, may do an author some injustice. We shall, as far as possible, avoid the commission of such injustice, by taking some of the passages to which we have referred, in accompaniment with their context; by presenting, if we may so express it, *the flower on the stalk*.

We will first give, not however as the best specimen possible, the outward Guinea voyage, and the arrival on the coast. The bright points of the passage we shall leave the reader to discover.

“ But soon the foul pre-eminence in guilt
By England was engrossed. From Mersey’s bay,

Or turbid Severn, mark the gallant ship,
Gaily bedecked, a scene of seeming joy,
Where many a heavy and repentant heart
Sees the green shore recede, the mountains
grey

Sink from the straining sight, and nought
all round

But wave and sky. Ere long sweet-scented
airs,

From Lusitania’s groves, swell every sail
With fragrance, every heart with vernal joy:
Smiling the aged helmsman turns to breathe
The balmy gale; while from the topmast
height

The ship-boy spies the blossom-gilded
shore

And thinks how happy is the land-boy’s
life,

Who fearless climbs among the loaded
boughs.

These shores glide fast away, and Atlas
frowns

Far o’er the deep: the fire-peaked Teneriffe
Amid the gloom of night is first descried:
With day, the islands falsely happy called
Pass in review, and tropic waves succeed.

Sagacious of the taint that still adheres
Indelible to decks long drenched with gore,
Death-omening birds supply a convoy dire;
Or forward flocking, ere the ship appear,
Wheel clamorous, and perch upon the beach,
Sure harbingers of wretchedness to him
Who daily with the sun, to scan the deep,
Yon mountain climbs, leading with boding
breast

His playful boy. And now the sails appear
Hung in the dim horizon: freedom's flag,
Britannia's glowing ensign, is descried;
Then full in view the floating prison-house,
The Pandorean ark of every curse
Imagination can combine to blast
Poor human life, comes rolling o'er the
surge.

The mother strains her infant to her breast,
And weeps to think her eldest-born has
reached

Those years, which, tender though they be,
provoke

The white man's thirst of gain: more dread-
ful far

The white man's scowl, than the couched
lion's glare!

Fiercely the mid-day sun beat overhead;
No shadow followed Maliel's playful steps;
As from the field, where he had watched to
scare

The plundering birds, he sought the neigh-
bouring wood

To drink the water from the chaliced herb;—
Sudden a hurrying step behind he hears:
It is the white man's tread. Trembling he
flies

To reach the friendly grove; when deep, a
roar,

The thunder of the new-waked lion's mouth,
Comes full upon his ear: the oppressor's
hand

With fetters loaded, or the lion's paw,—
Such is the dire alternative he views;—
Forward he flies and darts into the wood.”
p. 60—62.

Fain would we transcribe the
truly charming episode of the
“youthful mariner” in the second
canto; but, with its context, it
would be too long for our limits.
Towards its close it somewhat drags;
but parts of it are exquisite, and
the whole most affecting. Indeed
this canto, which is devoted to the
Middle Passage, seems to us supe-
rior to all the rest; and it often dis-
covers a strength and grandeur of
style, not common to Mr. Grahame.
The reader must be content with
the following account of the hold of
a slave-vessel.

“Night comes apace, but darkness is forbid
The view of misery from itself to shroud.

A glimmering lamp's dim beam faintly dis-
plays

The rows of living corpses to the sight,
As if the white men grudged that even one
sense

Should cease to be the instrument of woe.
But misery exquisite the vital powers
Exhausts, till sleep, unhop'd, weighs down
at last

The weary eyelids of a favoured few.—
When thus the tragic scene of present things
Is shut, the visionary past unfolds,
Soothing with transport bliss the mourner's
breast:

Again the father fancies that he's couched
Amid his children in their lowly hut;
Once more he fancies that he wakes and sees
The placid visage of his sleeping boy,
And then his eyes meek opening in a smile,
Followed by lisping accents of delight:
To clasp the child, he tries his shackled
arms

To stretch; roused by the galling iron, he
doubts,

He fears; the dread reality he feels;
Despair, despair comes rushing on his soul,
Like the dread cataract's din to one em-
barked

Upon a peaceful river, who forgets,—
Gliding along, from danger yet afar,
Entranced in pleasure with the goodly sight
Of lofty boughs, o'er-arching half the stream,
With melody of birds, upon these boughs,
That sing alternately and gaily plume
Their beauteous wings, and with the quiet
lapse

Of the smooth flood that bears him to his
fate,—

Forgets the thundering precipice of foam
That boils below, till suddenly aroused,
He hears at once and views his dreadful
doom.

“But mental anguish is ere long absorbed
In hideous pangs that rack, excruciate,
The frame corporeal; for now the waves
Begin to heave and shew their distant crests;
The gathering clouds in meeting currents
roll,

Contracting heaven's expanded canopy
Into a lurid vault. The sails are reefed;
All hatches closed; the confined captives
pant

For air; and in their various languages
Implore, unheard, that but a single board
Be raised: vain prayer, for now the beetling
surge

Breaks o'er the bow, and boils along the
deck.

Oh then the horrors of the den below!
Disease bursts forth, and, like the electric
shock

Sudden strikes through at once the prostrate
ranks.

Fierce fever pours his lava from the heart
And burus through every vein; convulsions
withers

Foaming, and gnaws and champs his twisted
arm ;

Dire trismus bends his victim on the wheel
Of torment, rivets close the firm-screwed jaw
In fearful grin, and makes death lovely seem.
Dreadful the imprecations, dire the shrieks,
That mingle with the maniac laugh ; the
gnash

Of teeth, delirium's fitful song, now gay,
Plaintive at times, then deeply sorrowful.
In such a scene Death deals the final blow,
In pity, not in wrath : 'tis he alone
That here can quench the fever's fire, un-
loose

The knotted tendon ; he alone restores
The frantic mind, that soon as freed ascends
To him who gave it being.

" One endless day, one night that seemed
a year,

The billows raged ; so long the slaves, im-
mured,
Struggled 'twixt life and death. At last the
winds

Abate ; subside the waves ; the fastened
boards

Unfold, and full o'erhead the hopeless eye
Sees, from his wooden couch, once more the
sun

Dim through the cloud that to the topmast
steams." pp. 68—71.

Here the lazar-house is almost
Miltonic. The striking simile of
the cataract seems an expansion of
a metaphor that occurs in a super-
lative line of Mr. Campbell's "*Ger-
trude of Wyoming*,"

" But mortal pleasure, what art thou in
truth ?

The torrent's smoothness, ere it dash below !"

Part iii. 5.

Mr. Grahame has, however, suf-
ficiently amplified the image to
make it his own.

The third canto of the poem is
devoted to the West Indies. The
fourth proclaims the glad tidings of
the Abolition ;

" Hail ! Africa, restored to human rights !
Blest be the hand benign of him who
stretched

The royal sceptre forth, and, with the touch
Electric of Britannia's will, consumed
The tyrant's chain, yet left the slave un-
scathed !

And blest, Columbia, be thy distant shores !
For they the peal with joy and freedom
franght

Reached, till it reached the coast of blood,

And with redoubled thunder stunned the ear
Of Murder as he aimed the fatal blow.

" Hail ! Africa, to human rights restored !
Glad tidings of great joy to all who feel
For human kind ! to him who sits at ease
And looks upon his children sport around
In health and happiness, even him ye
bring

Delight ne'er felt before : the dying saint,
Whose hymning voice of joy is fainter heard
And fainter still, like the ascending lark,
As nearer heaven he draws, hears the glad
words,

And bursts into a louder strain of praise :
The aged cottager, on Sabbath eve,
Amid his children and their children opes
That portion of the sacred book, which tells,
How with a mighty and an out-stretched
arm

The Lord delivered Israel from his bonds ;
Then kneeling blesses God that now the
curse

Of guiltless blood lies on this land no more.
Even they who ne'er behold the light of
heaven

But through the grated ir'on, forget awhile
Their mournful fate ; and mark a gleam of
joy

Pass o'er each fellow captive's clouded brow." p. 85, 86.

The poet thus anticipates the
establishment of Christianity in
Africa ;

" Already I behold the wicker dome,
To Jesus consecrated, humbly rise
Below the sycamore's wide spreading boughs :
Around the shapeless pillars twists the vine ;
Flowers of all hues climb up the walls, and
fill

The house of God with odours passing far
Sabeian incense, while combined with notes
Most sweet, most artless, Zion's songs as-
cend,

And die in cadence soft ; the preacher's
voice

Succeeds ; their native tongue the converts
hear

In deep attention fixed, all but that child
Who eyes the hanging cluster, yet with-
holds,

In reverence profound, his little hand."

p. 87.

The imagery here is extremely
sweet, though bordering on the fan-
tastic. We cannot look with equal
delight on the prophecy of the as-
tronomical proficiency of the ne-
groes. It not only occupies a space

disproportionately ample, but runs into quaintness. We the rather quote it, because this is exactly the fault of which, as we conceive, the marked sort of style which our author so much affects, is in danger.

"No more the negro dreads the white man's eye ;

No more, from hatred to the teacher, spurns Instruction : gladly he receives the boon Of science and of art. What ecstasy O'erpowers his faculties when first he sees The wonders of the telescopic power ; The woody mountain side is brought so near, He reaches forth to pull the loaded spray ;— But when, directed to the distant main, The veering tube converts a little speck Into a ship full sail, dashing the brine, He recollecting shudders at the sight, Till turning round he sees his teacher smile, And reassured stoops to the magic glass."

p. 87, 88.

Even the groundwork of this description is exceptionable. Before the Africans can be expected to turn our pupils in astronomy, they must, it may be presumed, have become too familiar with the sight of "a ship full sail dashing the brine," to shudder on beholding it.

We were somewhat disappointed by Mr. Grahame, when he had conveyed us to the West Indies. The slave system, though not a topic very appropriate to his powers, furnished interstices for all the characteristic excellencies of his poetry, of which he has not, in our humble judgment, fully availed himself.— This remark we would also extend, in a degree, to his account of the comparatively happy state of Africa, previously to the introduction of the Slave trade. In that account, the natural beauties of the inhabited parts of that continent are well represented ; but the domestic tranquillity of the savages is drawn with a tameness which, on such a subject, we should not have expected from this author.

Mr. Grahame concludes with encomiums on some of the most conspicuous advocates of the abolition.

CHRIST. OBSERV. No. 98.

"O that my voice,

To notes of praise unpractised and untuned,
I could but modulate to lofty strains
Of eulogy ! then would I bear record
Of them who foremost stood in freedom's
cause ;

Of Benezet's enlightened early zeal ;
The bold contempt with which the unfettered soul

Of Sharpe arraigned the pestilent response
Of law's high-priesthood, sanctioning an age
Of crimes, and paralyzing mercy's hand,
His dauntless arm that wielded nature's law,
And snatched the victim from the tyrant's
gripe ;

A Clarkson's every thought, and word, and deed,

Devoted in humanity's behalf,
His watchings, perils, toils by night and day,
His life one ceaseless act of doing good ;
The eloquence pathetic and sublime,
And spirit undismayed, of Wilberforce,
Erect when foiled ; the virtuous use of
power

By Grenville on the side of Justice ranged ;
The fervent beam of Gloucester's royal
smile ;

The hallowed wish of Fox's dying hour,—
Bequest most sacred to the freeman's heart,
Bequest, though faltered with his latest
breath,

More powerful than the full careering storm
Of eloquence that thundered from his
tongue." p. 90, 91.

With this panegyric it may gratify the reader to compare that of Mr. Montgomery on nearly the same persons.

—"When Sharpe, on proud Britannia's
charter'd shore,

From Lybian limbs th' unsanction'd fetters
tore,

And taught the world, that while she rules
the waves,

Her soil is freedom to the feet of slaves :

—When Clarkson his victorious course began ;

Unyielding in the cause of God and man,

Wise, patient, persevering to the end,

No guile could thwart, no power his purpose
bend,

He rose o'er Afric like the sun in smiles,

He rests in glory on the western isles ;

—When Wilberforce, the minister of grace,

The new Las Casas of a ruin'd race,

With angel-might oppos'd the rage of hell,

And fought like Michael till the dragon fell :

—When Pitt supreme amid the senate rose,

The negro's friend among the negro's foes ;

P

Yet while his tones like heaven's high thunder broke,
 No fire descended to consume the yoke :
 —When Fox, all-eloquent for freedom stood,
 With speech resistless as the voice of blood,
 The voice that cries through all the Patriot's veins,
 When at his feet his country groans in chains;
 The voice that whispers in the mother's breast,
 When smiles her infant in his rosy rest;
 Of power to bid the storm of passion roll,
 Or touch with sweetest tenderness the soul.
 He spake in vain;—till with his latest breath
 He broke the spell of Africa in death."

pp. 40, 41.

It will be seen, that into Mr. Grahame's list of worthies the name of Mr. Pitt is not admitted, and that, in the catalogue of Mr. Montgomery, it is celebrated in lines that seem to convey a covert sarcasm on the sincerity of that statesman in the cause of the Abolition. On the subject of Mr. Pitt's exertions in this cause, our poets have perhaps received their impressions from a certain periodical work, which has itself always lent a strenuous and most honourable aid to the abolitionists, but of which it may not, we hope, be libellous in us to observe, that, after having generally appeared during the life-time of Mr. Pitt to support him unequivocally in his political character, it has lost no opportunity since his death of vilifying his memory in the grossest and most blackening terms. With what propriety the charge of inconsistency or insincerity proceeds from mouths that can breathe a breath so different from itself, let the reader judge.

We can, we trust, conscientiously say, that, with respect to the question of the slave trade, we have feelings entirely paramount to all personal prejudices and attachments whatsoever. Whether Mr. Pitt duly estimated the predominant and almost incalculable importance of this question, we feel a degree of painful doubt. Sincere friends as we are to the fame of a man who

was, under divine Providence, the preserver, at some most critical seasons, of the best interests of this nation, and whom we believe to have been animated with a patriotism as ardent as ever swelled the heart of a human being, we earnestly wish that he had placed this matter out of all doubt; that either he had somewhat altered his conduct, or that, if it was right, he had, laying aside his disdain of popular opinion, condescended publicly to explain it. But in thus questioning his conduct, it is highly necessary to mention that we are trying this great man by a far higher standard than that of those who commonly urge the charge which we are considering. For it is vain to deny it; Mr. Pitt, at the worst, did nothing, in this instance, which was not fully justifiable according to the average political morality of the day. At the worst, we have as good evidence of his sincerity, as of that of those more ostensibly zealous abolitionists, who hazarded nothing by the part that they acted in the business. It will be recollected that Mr. Fox, after his accession to power, made, with respect to some alleged abuses in India, a compromise exactly similar to that which has been charged on Mr. Pitt respecting the Slave Trade; and this too, it might easily be shewn, with some circumstances of aggravation.

But if, from an unwillingness to devote himself to the cause of Africa at the risk of sacrifices which no other parliamentary supporter of it was called to make, from a fear of disgusting faithful and tried political associates, of dividing his cabinet, of shaking his parliamentary power,—if from a false principle of delicacy with regard to feelings and wishes entertained in quarters highly to be considered,—or if from any other similar motive, ---Mr. Pitt entered into compromises which greatly crippled his usefulness in this cause, let it never be forgotten that he still retains sufficient pretensions to be number-

ed among its most valuable patrons. If by his personal exertions in its favour, both in the way of laborious investigations of its details, and of most distinct and uncompromising public recommendations of it; if by lending to it from first to last the whole weight of his individual opinion, of his stupendous intellect, and of his overwhelming eloquence, he had not both decidedly accredited it, and very greatly illuminated the public mind with respect to it, it would not, in all human probability, have been successful now, nor perhaps for twenty years to come. While Mr. Clarkson, the martyr of humanity, while he, who has through his life cherished but one party-attachment, the attachment to the party of the abolitionists, professes himself satisfied with the zeal of Mr. Pitt respecting this question, it is too much that reflections should be cast on that zeal by those, who are not required to support the abolition at any other expence than the trouble of writing glowing verses on a most convenient, because most fertile, subject. We have no reason to doubt that the poets under our review detest from the very ground of their hearts those enormities which they have so well exposed; but at the same time, let us be allowed to observe, that we are not as yet in possession of any proofs of their detestation of them, equally strong with those which were afforded to the world by Mr. Pitt.

It will not be supposed that the object of any of the foregoing observations is to disparage the services of Mr. Fox in this arduous struggle. On the contrary, so highly do we estimate those services, that they were alone, in our opinion, sufficient to make it almost incumbent on all the lovers of justice and of mercy, however at variance with that great man in politics, to attend his funeral, and to weep over the grave that entombed one of the most memorable benefactors of the human race.

This digression, if indeed a tribute of justice to the memory of the departed can ever be considered as a digression, has greatly contracted the limits which we might otherwise have afforded to Mr. Benger, the last of this trio of poets. Indeed, his poem is not, by many pages, so long as that of Mr. Montgomery, nor quite so long, we believe, as that of Mr. Grahame. Mr. Benger's poetry, like that of the former, has very good points with considerable faults. He is not, indeed, often turgid, but he is often extremely obscure, and too often tame and inclining to the prosaic. But he has many good lines, and some that are excellent; his selection of topics is just, and his versification generally harmonious.—Without farther preamble, we will let the reader judge for himself.

" All human archives in this truth accord,
That feeble man is Ruin's mighty Lord;
States rise and fall as ages roll away,
But vice survives, the passions ne'er decay;
New tyrants start, where conquest once has
been,

The drama constant, tho' transposed the
scene.

Thus in those isles where, gazing with delight,

Columbus first repos'd his aching sight;
(Ere yet, his swan-white sails that beautiful
ous land

Approach'd, the younger world of nature's
hand;)

On the same sod, where (Rapine's helpless
prey,)

The plumed Indian pin'd his life away,
Enslav'd, degraded, doom'd to vile employ,
Deploring still the rifled hive of joy,
There the poor Negro, shackled with the
chain,

Rears, by his sweltering toil, the nectar'd
cane;

And, wretched exile from his brighter skies,
Breathes o'er the native's grave complaining
sighs,

Unconscious on what dust he treads, nor knows
Whose place he takes, whose heritage of
woes.

But not like him, the captive Indian pin'd,
Some gentler feelings sooth'd his simple mind;
Still might the patriarch to his children trace
His ancient home—his desolated place,—
And to familiar brethren still impart,
In native speech, the sorrows of his heart—

But Afric's outcast meets no kindred hand,
He mourns unsolac'd in a foreign land;
To him the heavens a fearful aspect wear,
Strange are the accents murmur'd in his ear.
He steals no balm from pity's lenient breath,
Hope sheds no gleam but thro' the vale of death;

An alien, far from nature's bosom cast,
He broods on wrongs, the present and the past;
And asks what vengeance shall the wretches wait,
Who bade him mourn within the stranger's gate." pp. 110, 111.

Surely the conception of this passage is happy, and the execution generally entitled to praise. The six lines beginning "There the poor negro," &c. strike us as eminently good. It may likewise be observed, that, in his description of the West-Indian system, Mr. Benger is more measured than his two compeers, who, on that topic, have somewhat violated, perhaps not *poetical*, but certainly *natural* justice. Their representations would lead a less informed reader to believe that the common course of treatment which slaves experienced in the West Indies, was not a regular course of oppressive labour, but a tissue of the most unnatural cruelties. Some of these that are in evidence, must be regarded rather as *extreme* cases. At the same time, when the abolition was under discussion, such cases were justly considered as very important. The important point was, according to the sound distinction of Mr. Fox, not that they had *occurred*, but that they had occurred *with impunity*. The impunity, the toleration of great crimes is a most important feature in the state of a society; and though there may be a wide distance between the extreme and the average of a thing, yet the average cannot be fixed correctly, until the place of the extreme is known. Mr. Montgomery, however, expresses, in his notes, a hope that the Creole planter, whom he has pictured as so horrible, "is a monster as rare as it is shocking."

We can afford to add only one

other extract from Mr. Benger. He is imagining the escape of a slave in Africa.

"Tho' distant far his native village lies,
No ocean rolls between, or tempests rise;
And oft his soul revolves the bold design,
(Whilst fancy measures back the devious line,)

Far through the woods his chartless path to trace,

And press thro' peril to his home's embrace;
Hope leaves him not, and in his midnight dream,

Again he tastes of that delicious stream
Which thro' his native vale translucent flows;
Again his own coeval palm he knows;
Through the rude hamlet's mist of smoke ascends,

And breathes (how lightly!) in the clime of friends.

And is he blest? he doubts—in griev'd amaze
His eyes uncloze—Ah!—not on friends to gaze,

From earth he springs with wild convulsive start—

But still the dream of bliss inflames his heart;
In strength sublime he lifts the fetter'd arm,
And sunders bondage from his manly form—
And is he free? with swiftly silent tread,
Soft as a shadow, glides he from the shed:
'Tis hope—'tis fear—no bounds his course restrain,

Strong as a torrent rolling o'er the plain—
He chafes the flood—he climbs the mountain steep,—

Nor trembles o'er the dun abyss to leap—
With dauntless step disturbs the serpent's brood,

And, spurning caution, plucks the berried food;

But when night's shadow o'er the forest falls,
And ev'ry breath the lonely man appals,
From the bruised reed he draws the latent fire,
And forms of grassy heaps the blazing pyre,
The sudden splendour flashes thro' the glen,
The startled lion seeks his gloomy den;
The keen-eyed tiger, scouring for his prey,
Turns from the lurid light in fierce dismay:
Whilst shrieks of death approach the wanderer's ear,

Who keeps with drowsy lid, the watch of fear,
And still sits cowering o'er the ruddy blaze,
Till pale it fades beneath the morning's rays;
But when, at length, each toil, each danger past,

He faintly views his native hills at last,
Though drooping now, and sickening with delay,

His eyes wax dim, his being melts away;
Yet, yet, he urges on his faltering feet,
His spirit guides him to his wonted seat:

The stream, the tree, in vision imag'd late,
He now beholds, his father's open gate—
Lifts to the humble roof his closing eyes,
Drops on the threshold, gazes, whispers, dies.
Enough for him with kindred clay to rest
On the same sod his foot in childhood prest;
'Mid living friends, still cherish'd, to consume,
His former home the guardian of his tomb."

pp. 114—116.

It is to be regretted that the story of Mansong, which fills so considerable a space in this poem, and is in itself very pathetic, should be almost unintelligible from the obscurity of the writer's manner. Towards the conclusion of his song, Mr. Benger indulges himself, like his brother bards, in a 'beatific vision' of the future civilization of Africa. He here expresses a wish "that the Christian faith may be introduced into that continent, but he has not, like his brother bards, made this a topic of prime consideration. In a commemoration of one of the greatest works of charity ever per-

formed by a Christian nation, it seems to us that those Christian principles, in which we believe the measure to have originated, cannot hold too distinguished a place. And what gift, less than Christianity, can ever repay to the African world the wrongs which it has sustained from the nations of Christendom?

We now close this volume, with the recommendation of it to the patronage of the public. Those who like engravings, will be much pleased with some which it contains from designs by Smirke. There are also likenesses of Messrs. Sharpe, Clarkson, and Wilberforce, engraved from models in wax. These it hardly falls within our province to criticise; but we may mention that they are accompanied by short statements of the parts respectively performed by those three gentlemen in effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

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&c. &c.

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IN the press: A Letter to Sir J. Nicholl, on his late Decision against a Clergyman for refusing to bury the Child of a Dissenter, by a Clergyman;—A History of the Mahrattahs, prefaced by an historical Sketch of the Deccan, by E. S. Waring, Esq.;—Historical Sketches of the South of India, in an Attempt to trace the History of the Mysore, by Lieut.-Colonel Mark Wilks;—A new Map of Devonshire, by Colonel Mudge, from actual Survey;—A theoretical and practical View of the Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb, by Dr. Watson;—the Scripture Atlas, intended to illustrate the Holy Scriptures;—and a second Edition, with Additions, of the Rev. Mr. De Courcy's Sermons, at 8s.

Preparing for the press: The History of the Parisian Massacre of St. Bartholomew, from authentic Sources and unpublished MSS., by the Rev. Thomas Comber;—A Translation of Bausset's Life of Fenelon, by Mr. Mudford;—and Travels in Syria and Egypt, by Mr. Hamilton.

Dr. Adam Clarke has announced that he has in the press, and will publish with all convenient speed, in four or five volumes, quarto, the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments: the Text taken from the most correct Copies of the present authorised Version: with all the marginal Readings— an ample Collection of parallel Texts, copious Summaries to each Chapter, and all requisite Maps, Plans, and Tables. The Date of every Transaction, through the Whole of the Old and New Testaments, as far as it has been ascertained by the best Chronologers, will be marked in the A.M. or Years from the Creation, collated throughout with the Years of the Julian Period; and in the A.A.C. and A.D. or Years before and after Christ:—with a Commentary and critical Notes.—In this work, Dr. Clarke states, that the whole of the text has been collated with the Hebrew and Greek originals, and all the ancient versions:—the most difficult words analysed and explained:—the most important readings in the Hebrew collections of Kennicott and De Rossi, and in the Greek collections of Mill, Wetstein, and Griesbach,

noticed:—the peculiar customs of the Jews and neighbouring nations, so frequently alluded to by the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, explained from the best Asiatic authorities:—the great doctrines of the Law and Gospel of God defined, illustrated, and defended; and the whole applied to the important purposes of practical Christianity and vital godliness:—Designed as a help to a better understanding of the sacred writings. —Subscriptions are received by Mr. Butterworth, Fleet Street, who will furnish the work either in parts, at 10s. 6d. each, or in numbers, at 1s. The first part will appear in May.

During a part of the month of January the weather was very severe; the thermometer being once, viz. on the 17th, 15° below the freezing point; and what seems singular is, that at this time the wind was from the west.

The following is a general bill of all the christenings and burials in London, from Dec. 18, 1808, to Dec. 12, 1809:

Christened	{ Males 9981	{ 19,612
	{ Females . . 9681	
Buried . .	{ Males 8636	{ 16,680
	{ Females . . 8044	

The fourth annual examination of the students at the East-India college, near Hertford, took place on the 21st of Dec. last, before Mr. Grant, the chairman, and a Committee of the Court of Directors. Many students gave specimens of their acquirements in the Persian, Sanscrit, Hindostanee, and Bengalee languages; as well as of their proficiency in classical literature, mathematics, natural philosophy, history, law, political œconomy, theology, &c. &c.; and Mr. Paul Marriot Wynch read an essay in English, on Patriotism, of his own composition, highly creditable to him. Prizes were given to the following students; viz. to Mr. Robert Anderson the certificate of superior merit for his knowledge of Sanscrit. He had before received the gold medal for this branch of learning, which precluded him from receiving one on this occasion. The same gentleman obtained the gold medal for history, political œconomy, classics, and mathematics, and the first prize for theology and law.

A gold medal to Mr. John Tindall for Persian and Sanscrit; to Mr. Andrew Anderson for law and mathematics; and Mr. P. M. Wynch for English composition.

Prizes of books to Messrs. Chastenay, Norris, Young, Clive, Lacon, Ainslie, MSween, Macleod, Larking, Carter, Lindsay, Wilkins, Pybus, Dick, and Hyde, for

their acquirements in different branches of study.

CAMBRIDGE.

The late Bishop of London, a short time before his death, directed that all the graduates, as well as under-graduates, of Christ college, should, in future, be admitted to be candidates for the two annual gold medals which he has given for ever. The subjects for the present year are: For the Latin dissertation—*Beatitudo humana non pendet tantummodo ex hac vitâ sed expectanda est alia*. For the English—*Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul.* 1 Pet. ii. 11.

Mr. Spencer Smith, late minister plenipotentiary at the Ottoman Porte, and brother to Sir Sidney, has presented this university with two very valuable Greek marbles, to be added to the collection in the vestibule; namely, the body of an Amphora, about three feet in length, from the shores of the Propontis; and a votive tablet, or Cippus, from Cyzicus. The first exhibits a bas-relief in a very high style of ancient sculpture; which is remarkable for the pilens, or Athenian hat, still worn by patriarchs of the Greek church; and of which only one other representation is preserved in ancient sculpture.

On the 20th of January 100 gentlemen, of whom 31 were of Trinity and 22 of St. John's, obtained the degree of bachelor of arts in the university of Cambridge. The following gentlemen obtained academical honours on that occasion:—

WRANGLERS.

Maule, Trin.	Hall, St. John's.
Brandreth, ditto.	Harrison, Trin.
Alderson, Caius.	Jowett, St. John's.
Carter, Trin.	Norgate, Caius.
Emmerson, Queen's.	Musgrave, Trin.
Ashbridge, Trin.	Marsham, St. John's.
Hudson, ditto.	Spooner, ditto.
Neale, Queen's.	Lennard, Jesus.
Duckworth, Trin.	

SENIOR OPTIMES.

Clarrvvince, Caius.	Beague, Emm.
Maddock, Bene't.	Tatham, St. John's.
Button, Queen's.	G. Watson, Pemb.
Springet, ditto.	Sharpe, Queen's.
Belgrave, St. John's.	Barslow, Trin.
Orman, Trin.	Cornforth, Mag.
Mountain, sen. ditto.	

JUNIOR OPTIMES.

Horner, Clare.	Scott, Queen's.
Harrison, St. John's.	Male, St. John's.
Heringham, Pemb.	Everard, Pet.
Husband, St. John's.	Fisher, Christ.
Platt, Trin.	Spilsbury, Jesus.
Hill, ditto.	Wade, St. John's.
Simons, St. John's.	Lane, Mag.
Gisborne, Trin.	

LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

THEOLOGY.

A Sermon preached before his Grace the Archbishop of York, and the Clergy of Malton, at the Visitation, August 1809. By the Rev. Sydney Smith, Rector of Foston, Yorkshire. 2s.

An Inquiry into the moral Tendency of Methodism and Evangelical Preaching, including some Remarks on the Hints of a Barrister. By William Burns. 4s.

The Exposition of the Creed. By John Pearson, D. D. Bishop of Chester, abridged by the Rev. C. Burney, of Greenwich. 8s.

Jesus of Nazareth the Son of Joseph. A Sermon preached at the Unitarian Chapel, Belper, Derbyshire. By the Rev. D. Davies. 8vo. 1s.

Letters on the Miraculous Conception: a Vindication of the Doctrine maintained in a Sermon preached at Belper, in Derbyshire; in Answer to the Rev. D. Taylor and the Rev. R. Alliot. By the Rev. D. Davies. 8vo. 1s. 6d.

An Oration delivered on Monday, October 16, 1809, on laying the first Stone of the New Gravel-Pit Meeting-House. By Robert Aspland. 1s.

Candour and Consistency united, or Considerations on some important Duties connected with the Belief of evangelical Truth. 12mo. 3s.

A Vindication of the Jews, by way of Reply to the Letter addressed by Perseverans to the English Israelite. By Thomas Witherby. 7s.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Topography of London, by John Lockie, Inspector of Buildings to the Phoenix Fire Office. 8vo. 8s.

A View of the ancient and present State of the Zetland Islands, including their civil, political, and natural History, Antiquities, and an Account of their Agriculture, Fisheries, Commerce, and the State of Society and Manners. By Arthur Edmonston, M.D. 2 vols. 8vo. 18s.

A Description of the Feroe Islands, translated from the Danish. By the Rev. G. Landt. 8vo. 12s.

The Works of William Hogarth, elucidated by Descriptions, critical, moral, and historical. By Thomas Clerk. Part I. (to be completed in Six monthly Parts) royal 8vo. 12s.

A full-length Portrait of the late Right Rev. Beilby Porteus, D. D., Bishop of London, engraved by Picart from a Drawing by Edridge. 1l. 1s. Proofs 1l. 11s. 6d.

Elements of Geometry, Geometrical Analysis, and Plane Trigonometry, with Notes and Illustration. By John Leslie, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Edinburgh. 8vo. 12s.

The Edinburgh Encyclopædia. Vol. II. Part II.

A System of Astronomy, on the simple Plan of Geography; the principal Constellations being exhibited by separate Maps, with their Boundaries, chief Stars, &c. A Map of the Heavens, a Disk of the Moon, with Descriptions, &c. By John Greig. 5s.

The Narrative of the Rev. Joseph Samuel C. Frey, Minister of the Gospel to the Jews: including all the Circumstances which led to his Separation from the Missionary Society, and his Union with the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews. 8vo. 7s.

An Account of the several Life Assurance Companies established in London, with a comparative View of their respective Merits and Advantages. By Francis Bailey. 1s.

The East India Register and Directory for 1810. By John Mathison and Alexander Way Mason. 7s. 6d.

The unpublished Correspondence of Madame du Deffand. Translated by Mrs. Meeke. 2 vols. 8vo. 1l. 1s.

The New School, being an Attempt to illustrate its Principles, Detail, and Advantages. By Thomas Bernard, Esq. 2s. 6d.

The New Family Receipt Book, a Collection of nearly eight hundred Receipts (omitting those in Medicine and Cookery) in various Branches of Domestic Economy. Small 8vo. 7s. 6d.

The high Price of Bullion a Proof of the Depreciation of Bank Notes. By David Ricardo. 2s.

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

MISSION TO TARTARY.

THE following particulars respecting the missionary settlement at Karass, are taken from the Religious Monitor of December last.

"Karass stands on the east side of the largest of the five mountains, called Besh-taw, in about 48° north lat. and 61° east long. from London. The mountains of Ca-

casus lie to the south, south-east, and south-west of the Besh-taw. They wind in a circular range from N. W. to S. E. and terminate towards the south-west of the Caspian.

"The settlement at this time, is in a better state with regard to safety than ever it was at any former period, as the fences are made much stronger: there being no less than two double fences around it, with a ditch between them; and the whole defended by a guard of six cossacks. In consequence of being thus secured, it has not suffered such losses from bands of robbers, this season, as in former years.

"At present, there are ten dwelling houses, or distinct families in the settlement, and the number of inhabitants young and old that properly belong to it is forty-three souls. The double fences include a piece of ground about 270 feet square, on the declivity of the east side of one of the Besh-taw mountains. The gardens and other inclosures are pretty extensive, so that at present there is a considerable number of acres in cultivation. Little or no grain has as yet been sown; so that the whole flour and millet necessary for the consumption of the settlement, is usually purchased in the market of Georghievsk. The chief articles raised in the gardens of Karass, are potatoes, tobacco, cabbages, green peas, and a number of other esculents.

"Agricultural labour is certainly too severe for the constitutions of Englishmen in this climate. They are unable to support the fatigue which it requires, for any length of time, without bringing on disease and weakness. The members of the settlement, therefore, are much more likely to support themselves by mechanical trades, than by the products of the field; there being abundance of Russians and Tartars whose constitutions agree with the climate, and who are able to bear fatigue, whilst there are very few good tradesmen, on the lines of Caucasus. On this account every piece of good workmanship sells very dear.

"It is impossible to say much as yet with regard to the weaving, as it has never got a sufficient trial among us. Weaving is a very lucrative trade in Sarepta, particularly the weaving of cotton, silk-and-cotton handkerchiefs, &c.: however, it cannot be expected to be so profitable in Karass, till cotton can be spun and dyed among ourselves. A stocking weaver would probably do well in Karass, as there are few or none in the neighbourhood.

"There are several other trades which would be likely to succeed here: for instance, that of watch-making, or rather of

watch-mending; because there are plenty of watches in the country, and but few to put them in repair. There is not a watchmaker in the whole country, except one, (an Armenian) at Georghievsk, who knows little or nothing of his business. Great numbers of people send their watches so far as to Sarepta, to be repaired, rather than put them into his hands.

"On the Pod-Kuma towards Georghievsk, and at several places, not far distant from the settlement, good potter's clay is found, which, in the hands of a skilful workman, would make excellent crockery-ware of every kind. Glazed ware sells very dear in Georghievsk. There is no fabric for making articles of this sort in all the southern provinces of Russia. Pottery would, on this account, most probably prove very advantageous at Karass. It is true, that coarse unglazed earthen jars and pots are made about Georghievsk; but tea-cups, tea-pots, and soup-plates, &c. come from Germany, Holland, and England. Glass-ware of all kinds, however, is pretty reasonable. A hatter, likewise, might do well; particularly if he could make fine hats, which sell high, as the materials for making them can be easily and readily procured.

"The Ebse, or Sonna country, lies about seven days' journey from Besh-taw. The river Sisagour, Agour, or Ager, runs through the country, and dividing it into two districts, discharges itself into the Black Sea. This country is said to contain upwards of fifty villages, some of which may be accounted considerable towns. In Latli, according to report, there are about 900 houses, built chiefly of stone and lime. The greater part of the people are free; at the same time, a number of villages are at the disposal of two chiefs, the one called Sioky, and the other Otur. Another chief named Fingis, has the property of seven villages. The free people, however, are both the most numerous and the most powerful; and the whole population is computed at 200,000. The country is said to be very healthy, and abounds with wood of every kind. The Sonnas are professed Christians. They believe in one God, and in Jesus Christ, as their only Saviour and King. They pray that God would bless them for Christ's sake, and continue to them the blessings which their forefathers enjoyed. They baptize their children four or five days after they are born, by washing them all over the body. In their churches they have images, some of which they say were produced by the power of God, in a miraculous way. In one of their churches, they have the image of a young horse, which

they believe to have been likewise divinely produced. When they swear, they wish that they may be turned to the left at the day of judgment, should their oath be false. They observe fasts, and kill cattle to feed the poor, when they profess to repent of sins. They observe the Sabbath in a religious way, and have a number of priests who are allowed to marry. In their churches, they have a number of large books, which the priests read, but do not pretend to explain. The services in their churches consist mostly in singing and prayer. The priests, when they officiate, put on long garments, that are richly ornamented with gold and silver. When they pray, they look towards heaven, with uplifted hands. They look on the preservation of Christianity among them as a miracle. They inoculate their children with the small-pox, on the crown of the head. The Sonna country is very fruitful. They cultivate the ground, and have large gardens, that are enclosed with stone walls. The men and women eat together, and both wear long hair. Some of them keep slaves; but the greater part disapprove of this practice, and dread lest it should bring calamities upon their nation. Most of the above particulars in regard to the Sonna nation, were had from an intelligent man, a Sonna by birth, who, in 1806, came from the Sonna nation, to endeavour to bring about a peace between his countrymen and the Circassians, who had long been at variance with each other. It is evident from the above particulars, that the Sonnas are Greek Christians. It is probable that they once belonged to the Georgian church.

"The Abazas are a people that differ in their language from all the other mountain tribes.—They live about the head of the Kuma and Pod Kuma: and on both sides of the higher regions of the Kuban. In clothing, and in their way of living, they resemble the Circassians. They were formerly Christians; but most of them have now embraced Mohammedism. Such of them as live on this side of the Kuban, are brought into a sort of subjection to the Circassian beys. The Abazas differ in their characteristics from both Tartars and Circassians. They have more of the appearance of Europeans than of Asiatics. Most of them have light coloured hair, brown eyes, and Roman noses, with ruddy, fair complexions. A few years ago, they were a very powerful people; but the plague has made, and is still making, dreadful ravages among them. Some authors confound the Abazas who live beyond the Kuban, with the Abazichs, but they are two distinct nations.

CHRIST. OBSERV. No. 98.

The Abazichs, if we draw conclusions from language, appear to be of the Circassian race; for they speak a dialect of the Circassian language, and in their manners resemble that people. They are said to be a powerful people, and to live in a detached manner in small villages. Their country abounds with wood, and is very fruitful. They were formerly Christians, and many of them are so still; but of late years, Mohammedism has made great advances among them. They are a very wild barbarous people, which renders travelling among them impossible. They, as well as the Abazas, have chiefs the same as the Circassians.

"The east end of the Circassian mountains is called Daghestan, and is inhabited by a numerous tribe called Lesgiz: and from this people, that quarter is sometimes called Legizstan. They are supposed to have come from the north of India, to this place. All that can be said, however, concerning the origin of the various tribes of people that inhabit the Circassian mountains, amounts to nothing more than conjecture, as the most of these people are too ignorant and illiterate, to have preserved any remains of their own origin among themselves; and even the written traditions of some of them partake so much of fable, that it is no easy matter to find out the truth.

BRISTOL AUXILIARY BIBLE SOCIETY.

The committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society having represented to the Bishop of Bristol (Dr. Mansell), their wish that an auxiliary society should be formed in that city for promoting the great objects of their institution, his Lordship was pleased to express his concurrence, and to address the following circular letter on the subject to the clergy of his diocese.

"Reverend Sir,

"Having been requested by the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society to recommend the formation of an Auxiliary Society in the city of Bristol, similar to those which have been established in several great towns throughout the kingdom; I beg leave to state, that such a measure has my hearty approbation, and that it will afford me the greatest pleasure to see it carried into execution.

I am, Reverend Sir,

Trin. Col. Cambridge, Yours, faithfully,

Jan. 9th, 1810.

W. BRISTOL.

In consequence of this letter a requisition was addressed to the Mayor of Bristol, by the clergy and other principal inhabitants of the city, requesting that a meeting might be convened in the Guildhall for the purpose of giving effect to his lordship's recommendation.

Q

tion. A meeting was accordingly called, and took place on the 1st of February, the Mayor in the chair. The business was opened by the Rev. Dr. Small, who highly commended the object, constitution, and proceedings of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and earnestly recommended the formation of an Auxiliary Society for the city and vicinity of Bristol. The secretaries of the parent society, who attended by particular request, then addressed the meeting. The Rev. Mr. Steinkopff represented the destitute condition of several parts of the continent with respect to the Holy Scriptures, and the very gratifying manner in which they had been supplied, through the medium of the British and Foreign Bible Society; concluding with an eulogium on British beneficence and liberality with regard to foreign nations. The Rev. Mr. Hughes took a cursory view of the society; and pointed out how admirably it was adapted to promote the glory of God, and the universal welfare of mankind. The Rev. Mr. Owen entered at some length into the consideration of the society's constitution, as associating in the prosecution of one common object, all denominations of Christians: he contended that the object of the association was one in which all descriptions of Christians might legitimately and correctly unite, and demonstrated, both by argument and an ap-

peal to facts, that no deviation could occur, nor had occurred, from the fundamental rule of the society, to circulate the Scriptures, according to the authorised version, through the united kingdom; and without comment, both at home and abroad: he then concluded by an appeal to the citizens of Bristol on behalf of the institution, their support to which might serve to bring down blessings on themselves, and to transmit those blessings as a patrimonial inheritance to their children's children. A constitution was then adopted for the Auxiliary Society, similar, in almost all respects, to that of its parent. Books were opened in the hall for subscriptions, and more than 700*l.* were immediately contributed. It was a gratifying sight to witness the ministers and laity of the several denominations of Christians assembled on this occasion, united with the utmost cordiality, in countenancing and supporting so important an instrument of promoting the temporal and eternal interests of their fellow-creatures both at home and abroad.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

The Committee of this Society have appointed the annual meeting to be held in the great room at the (Old) London Tavern, in Bishopsgate Street, near Cornhill, on Wednesday the 2d of May, at 12 o'clock precisely.

VIEW OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

CONTINENTAL INTELLIGENCE.

SPAIN, we fear, has reached the crisis which we have long anticipated, when France, disembarassed from the necessity of directing her principal force to another quarter, should be able to inundate the peninsula with her immense regular armies. Experience having proved that the Spaniards did not possess energy sufficient to expel so small a number as sixty or seventy thousand Frenchmen from the heart of their country, and thus oblige their enemy, in renewing his attempt to subjugate them, to fight his way through the passes of the Pyrennees, the hope seemed to us to be utterly vain, that any thing like effectual resistance could be given to Bonaparte's means of annoyance, when they came to be combined against Spain singly. It is supposed that from two hundred and fifty to three hundred thousand French troops have marched into that country since the termination of

the war with Austria; and the effect of these reinforcements has been fully felt. The passes of the Sierra Morena were forced with hardly any resistance, and Seville taken possession of by the French, who, according to the latest accounts, had advanced within ten or twelve leagues of Cadiz. A large body of troops is said to have thrown itself into this city; but we are not disposed to draw any very favourable conclusion from this circumstance. Confidence, we greatly fear, is at an end; and the people of rank and property appear intent, not so much on defending this last hope of Spain, as on escaping with such property as they can realise to Gibraltar, or England, or South America. The most extraordinary circumstance is, that the descent of the French into Andalusia appears not to have been looked for at Seville and Cadiz; and to have excited there as much surprize and consternation as it would in London to hear that

50,000 Frenchmen had reached Blackheath. It is difficult to account for the blind providence which has distinguished Spain in every stage of this great contest. Danger seems to have been little thought of, except when in view. And let some slight and partial advantage be obtained, or let the enemy from motives of policy act merely on the defensive, and forbear for a time any active operations, every letter marked the foolish elation which pervaded the public mind; an elation evidenced not by mustering their hardy myriads to the battle, and making their oppressor feel

"How strong in labour's horny hand the steel,"

but in premature rejoicing and fruitless vaunts.

Let England be admonished by the example: the lesson which it furnishes is too valuable to be disregarded. We recur to what we have often asserted. The dangers which threaten this country are rightly appreciated, we fear, by few. Like the infatuated Spaniards, seeing no hostile force within the narrow field of our visible horizon, we therefore lie down in fancied security. But ought we to shut our eyes to this; that the power of France is every day becoming more formidable, and that that power, increased by an accumulation of fresh resources and by the uncontrouled possession of fresh points of embarkation, is about to be directed against this single country? But let us not be misunderstood. If we urge again on the serious consideration of our readers the magnitude of the conflict which it has pleased Providence should still await us, it is not that they may be led to cherish dismay or despondency; but that, instead of spending themselves, like the Spaniards, in

"Haughty boast and threatening tone;" or in heats that die ere half their work is accomplished, they may be prepared for those extensive sacrifices, and those vigorous, combined, and persevering exertions, which will probably be required of them: it is that they may be stirred up to greater diligence and earnestness in prayer, both for themselves and their country, that God would turn from us the tide of desolation, and be our defence and our shield.

It seems hardly necessary to advert particularly to the state of the Spanish government. The Cortes, though summoned, had not met; and it is now but little likely that they can be assembled. The Junta of Seville endeavoured to effect their escape on the approach of the French. The populace, suspecting treachery, seized such of them as

were within their reach, and proceeded to appoint a regency, consisting of Montijo and the younger Palafox (who were delivered from confinement by the populace) and Castanos.

The Spanish ships of war, almost all of which are said to be collected at Cadiz, have moved into the outer harbour, with a British squadron interposed between them and the shore. They may therefore, we hope, be considered as rescued from the gripe of France.

Ceuta, on the coast of Africa, has been taken possession of by 2000 men of the garrison of Gibraltar.

The annexation to the French empire, not only of part of Holland, but of the whole line of coast from Holstein to Flanders, appears to be finally determined by Bonaparte; and bodies of French troops have been stationed at different points in this line, to suppress all opposition to the change, or even any murmur against it. The dissatisfaction of the Dutch, however, though not loud, appears to be deep; they have even gone so far as to publish, in one of their principal newspapers, a remonstrance against the usurpation of France, which can answer little purpose, in existing circumstances, except to increase the jealousy of their oppressor, and thus add to the weight of their chains. Measures of increased severity have been adopted, in order to ensure the exclusion of British commerce; and all British manufactures and colonial produce found in Holland or Flanders are to be confiscated, in order "to repair the havoc occasioned by our attack on Walcheren." American vessels are also prohibited, absolutely, and without exception, from entering the ports of Holland.

UNITED STATES.

The whole of the correspondence between our government and Mr. Erskine, on the subject of the disallowed treaty with America, is now before the public. Mr. Erskine does not affect to deny that he has departed from the letter of his instructions, though he conceives himself to have adhered to their spirit. On one most important point, however, he departs (probably through misapprehension), not only from the letter, but from the spirit, too, of his instructions. He had been directed to demand from the American government a distinct recognition of our right, in case the Orders in Council were repealed, to enforce their Non-intercourse Law with France by the capture of such American vessels as might attempt to contravene that law. Mr. Erskine says that this proposition was not objected to by the American government; but that it appeared

to them to require no formal recognition, since their interference could obviously never be required, and, if it were, could never be obtained by any American citizen, in a case in which he sought redress for an injury incurred in consequence of a direct breach of their own laws. And in this explanation Mr. Erskine appears to have acquiesced as satisfactory. Mr. Erskine, however, does not seem to have been aware that such an admission on the part of the American government was perfectly nugatory, and could have no effect whatever in securing the object which it professed to aim at. He ought to have known that our prize courts not only could not take cognizance of such a vague admission on the part of the American minister, but that they could not take cognizance even of the clearest and most express enactments of the American legislature on the subject. The municipal laws of foreign states furnish no rules for the guidance of our courts of prize; nor can they, on any occasion, be pleaded by our cruisers in justification of maritime capture. This is a principle which has been repeatedly and even recently decided: and the decision must have been known to the American government, at the time they made their *apparently* candid admission. The American legislature, some years since, prohibited, under severe penalties, all trade to the new republic of Hayti. Our cruisers, encouraged by this law, seized many American vessels when on the point of entering Haytian ports.

The existence of the prohibitory enactment was fully established, and the fact also of its contravention; but the captured property was nevertheless restored, in every instance, although there was no reclamation on the part of the American government, on this broad ground, that neither our courts of Admiralty, nor our cruisers, had any thing to do with the municipal regulations of other states;—the only rules for their guidance being the law of nations as modified by treaty, or by his Majesty's Orders in Council. The necessity therefore of obtaining a formal recognition, and not a mere verbal admission of the principle in question, on the part of the American government, if it was really intended to enforce the prohibition of a commercial intercourse between America and France, cannot be disputed. This Mr. Erskine was instructed to obtain as one condition of the repeal of our Orders in Council: but he did not obtain it; neither did he obtain any thing in its place beyond the mere shadow of a substitute.

Considerable hopes are entertained that the differences between Great Britain and the United States will still be brought to an amicable termination. This desirable result is likely to be promoted by some recent instances of severity towards American ships in the ports subject to France. Many of them, it is said, have been seized; and with respect to their absolute exclusion from Holland, there can be no doubt.

GREAT BRITAIN.

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEEDINGS.

THE subject which has chiefly occupied the attention of Parliament during the present month, has been the inquiry into the policy and the conduct of the expedition to the Scheldt. It may be premature to give any distinct opinion on either of these points. The course of the evidence, however, as far as it has hitherto proceeded, cannot be considered as favourable to ministers. It is impossible, however, to say what evidence may be yet in reserve, particularly as the secret committee appointed to examine such documents as could not safely be communicated to the public, have not as yet made any report. We therefore purposely abstain from any observations; and shall do no more, at present, than lay before our readers the following return, shewing the effective strength of the army when it embarked in July, and its state about a month ago; viz.

Embarked: 1738 officers, and 37,481 non-

commissioned officers and men. Killed: 7 officers and 99 men. Died on service abroad, and since their return: 67 officers and 3999 men. Deserted or discharged: 109 men. Returned and now borne on the strength of their corps: 1671 officers and 53,373 men; of whom are reported sick, 217 officers and 11,296 men.

Some commotion has been excited among the newspaper reporters and editors, and the coffee-house politicians, by the enforcement of the standing order of the House of Commons, for the exclusion of strangers, during the examination of evidence respecting the Walcheren expedition. It cannot, however, be alleged that any real inconvenience has resulted from this measure. Its only effect is, that the evidence is not published for some days after it has been given. But then it appears in a much more perfect form than that in which it would otherwise have been exhibited, being copied from the

authentic minutes printed for the use of the members. This prudential restriction of the indulgence usually allowed to reporters has given occasion to many indecent reflections in the public prints; and one hand-bill, the production of the well-known Mr. Gale Jones, so far overstepped the boundaries of decorum, that it was thought necessary by the house to take cognizance of it. It was pronounced to be a gross violation of the privileges of the house; and its author has been committed to Newgate.

In the course of the Walcheren inquiry, some divisions have taken place in the House of Commons, in which Ministers have found themselves in a minority. One of these was on an important occasion, when, after due notice had been given, a motion for papers, which was resisted by the whole force of the government, was carried against them by a majority of 178 to 171.

The thanks of both Houses of Parliament have been voted to Lord Gambier, and the fleet under his command, for their achievements in Basque Roads; and to Lord Wellington and his army, for the victory obtained at Talavera. A Pension of 2000*l.* a-year for his own life, and that of two of his successors, has been settled by parliament on Lord Wellington.

The navy estimates for the present year have been voted; viz. for 130,000 men, in all, 10,876,700*l.*

A bill for rendering the abolition of reversionary grants perpetual, passed the House of Commons; but, through some defect in form, was rejected in the House of Lords. Another bill to the same effect has been originated in the upper house by Earl Grosvenor.

The finance committee has been re-appointed, and has undergone some changes agreeably to the suggestions of Mr. Bankes, who is re-appointed chairman of it. Several persons named by that gentleman were objected to by ministers, and others proposed in their stead; but the house decided in favour of Mr. Bankes's nomination.

His Majesty has informed parliament that he has entered into arrangements with Portugal for taking into his pay an army of Portuguese troops not exceeding 30,000 men. This message is likely to give birth to much discussion.

The great scarcity of coin and bullion, which has been experienced in this country for some time past (gold having risen about ten shillings an ounce in price), has attracted the notice of parliament, and a committee has been appointed to investigate the subject.

Sir Samuel Romilly, with that exemplary perseverance in the pursuit of the public good which has ever distinguished this eminent lawyer, has brought the state of criminal law in this kingdom under the consideration of parliament. We trust that his humane and enlightened exertions to amend our criminal code will be attended with success.

The following account has been laid before the House of Commons, of the total net produce of the permanent, annual, and war taxes, in the years ended the 5th Jan. 1809, and the 5th Jan. 1810.

Permanent Taxes, 1809	32,158,450	15	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
Annual ditto	4,929,790	1	9
War ditto	20,291,797	10	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
Total	£ 57,380,038	8	5

Permanent Taxes, 1810	33,544,348	19	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
Annual ditto	4,920,760	18	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
War ditto	20,798,145	10	7 $\frac{1}{4}$

Total £ 59,263,255 8 8

Making an excess of nearly two millions in favour of the latter year.

Petitions have been presented to parliament from the Roman catholics of several counties in Ireland, and also from those of Great Britain, praying for the relief of their body from all existing disabilities; we may therefore expect that this subject will shortly be agitated in the senate. We are happy, however, to observe, that this important question has somewhat changed its aspect of late. It now appears that the great mass of the catholics of Ireland are disposed not to concede to the king an effectual negative on the appointment of their bishops, nor to agree to certain measures of regulation with a view to the security of the established church, which formed the basis of the plan adopted by Mr. Pitt and his colleagues in office for the benefit of the catholics; and that, in consequence of their avowed disinclination to any such compromise, Lord Grenville, in a printed letter to Lord Fingal, has avowed his determination not to take any part in bringing forward the question of Catholic emancipation. This letter may be considered as expressive of the general sentiments of Lord Grenville's party; and it happily removes any fear which was entertained, lest, on his lordship's return to power, this delicate question should be intemperately pressed into discussion by the king's servants. Lord Grenville may possibly appear to some to have acted inconsistently in this matter, and to have been influenced by a wish to smooth the way for his

return to office. It is due, however, to his lordship, to state that in all his speeches in support of Catholic emancipation, he assumed (and in this he was justified by the assurance of Lord Fingal himself) that the catholics would agree both to place an effectual controul on the nomination of their bishops in the hands of the king, and to adopt measures for the security of the establishment. It further appears, that the real sentiments of the catholics have only recently manifested themselves; and that the moment they were expressed, Lord Grenville thought it right to declare the change in his views.

NAVAL INTELLIGENCE.

Two out of four of the enemy's frigates, which sailed some time since from France, have been destroyed in the West Indies, after a most gallant contest, in which some

batteries on the island of Guadaloupe, by which the French ships were defended, were taken possession of by our squadron. The other two have effected their escape to Brest. In the course of the outward voyage, they captured the English frigate *Junon*, after a gallant resistance, in which the *Junon* was so much injured, that she had scarcely surrendered when she sunk.

Two more French frigates have been taken; one, *La Nymphé*, captured near the Cape of Good Hope by the *Iphigénie*, and the other, *La Canonnière*, which was taken on the coast of France, on her return from the East Indies, full of booty, by one of the ships of the channel fleet.

Admiral Cochrane had prepared a force for the attack of Guadaloupe, to which it is said he was about to proceed.

OBITUARY.

Some Account of the last Moments of G. G., who lately died near London.

——— "My dear boy," speaking to his son, "you are but just entering upon your pilgrimage. I wish you to go on step by step, grace by grace, until you arrive at the kingdom of heaven."—"Father," replied the lad, with tears in his eyes. "I will endeavour to follow your example." "My example! my child" (throwing aside the curtain of his bed, and looking at him with uncommon earnestness and solicitude, as if to impress what he was going to say in a manner that should not be forgotten)—"My example can afford you very little service. It has been full of error. I was always a sinful creature. I can plead nothing but the merits of my Saviour. You should say that you will endeavour to follow the example of Christ. I hope you will, my dear boy, through the assistance of God's Holy Spirit."

To his wife, who hung over his bed, and who was unable to suppress the bitterest pangs of grief, he said:—"Do not distress yourself so much, my dear. You should recollect that you, also, are far advanced in life, and that you cannot long survive me. I hope, through Christ, that we shall not be separated hereafter, but shall meet again in a blessed eternity."

When he had signed his will, and seemed satisfied with his other worldly arrangements, he was asked by a friend if he would have the church service for the sick read to him. To this proposition he immediately assented; and whilst the duty was

performing, his attention was steadily and devoutly fixed, except at such intervals as he was interrupted by the acutest pains of spasm, when he would stop the reader for a few moments; observing, that though his body was weak and infirm, he trusted his spirit was strong in the Lord.

When a friend was leaving his room the night previous to his departure, he requested him to stay a little; and after a short pause, during which time he seemed to be collecting all his remaining strength in order to bid him a final adieu—"I feel now," said he, "that I am going very fast. My soul, I trust in Christ, will shortly be with angels and archangels, and all the host of heaven. We shall all, I trust, through Christ, meet again in the blessed mansions of rest:"—and then he immediately subjoined, in a tone of voice low and faltering from extreme debility, a general prayer for all mankind—Jews, Turks, and infidels; for all those in error or adversity of any kind whatsoever.

When restless in bed, his wife inquired of him what he wanted. He replied, "to be with my God."

When his son was shedding the tears of filial affection and sympathy, he said, "Do not grieve, my child. There is nothing to grieve at. I trust in Christ I shall soon be happier than this world can make me."—At various times during his illness he gave his son the best advice. The following remarks were the most striking:—"Love and succour your mother. Be honest and industrious in your calling, whatever it may be. Guard

yourself particularly against the allurements of evil companions; you will be sure to meet with many of them in your progress through life. This world is much more wicked than at present you can be aware of: the best way to avoid its influence is frequent prayer to God. You must not depend upon your own exertions in this or in any other thing. You must beseech the Almighty to afford you the aid of his Holy Spirit, through Christ, in all the dangers and difficulties you may have to encounter."

He never uttered any prayer or supplication to God, but in the name and through the mediation of Jesus Christ. His pious ejaculations were numerous and frequent. Amongst them were: "Thou art the rock of my defence. Do thou, O God, support me in the hour of death and in the day of judgment"—"Not my will, but thine, be done"—"Oh my offended Saviour, let now my affections enter heaven, whither thou art gone, and in thy good time permit my soul to follow them"—"What are my sufferings, in comparison of thine for sinful man?"—"I feel great pain; but I trust, through Christ, that my afflictions will work for me a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

His moaning was sometimes loud and dismal; and to a friend who stood by him he said: "You must not imagine, Mr. S., that the noise I make is voluntary. It is not so. I cannot avoid it. It is the effect of spasm. I am half suffocated. I can hardly fetch my breath. I cannot indeed help making this noise. I do not know how it is; but I hope God will not consider it as murmur or complaint. His blessed will be done." When the above friend was going to leave his chamber, he asked him if he had any commands to Mr. H. He answered, "Give my duty to my master, and tell him I have but a short time to stay here; and that, through Christ, I trust our souls will be united in a blessed eternity. Tell him my heart overflows with gratitude for the kindness I have received from him, but that my tongue cannot express it. Mr. S., you must endeavour to express my gratitude for me. You can do it better than I can."

A short period before his dissolution, when the laudanum which he had taken by the advice of his medical attendant occasioned him to slumber, he awoke suddenly, and exclaimed—"Where have I been? I have not been with my God!" To which his nurse replied—"You have been asleep, and your heart may have been with God." "Yes," said he, "but I should be always talking with my God."

His last words were—"My God and my Saviour"—twice repeated with great earnestness: after which he sighed twice, and stirred no more.

Mr. Editor, I take the liberty of sending you the above relation of circumstances attending a death-bed, for the authenticity of which I can vouch, hoping, if it should be admitted to a place in your obituary, that it may affect the minds of some of your readers, as I confess it has affected my own.

We are not to expect much that is new in these relations; for indeed death is too awful an event, even in its most favourable approaches, to leave much room for the imagination to play, or the finer shades of character to unfold themselves in the dying. The benefit we are to expect from the recurrence of scenes such as these to the mind, is of another and perhaps superior kind: it is this, that they strongly serve to fix upon it views, which almost every thing else in the world is calculated to conceal. Whilst the guilt of mankind seems to be that they live without God in the world, their curse seems to be that they live as without death in the world; that is, without any view towards it, or preparation for it. A curse this is, which the believer feels to be even greater than the one by which the stroke of death was first inflicted. Whatever therefore tends to recall that which should never be a stranger to our thoughts; whatever realizes to our view a scene through which we have all to pass, more particularly if it chalk out the very track we should wish to pursue, and teach us by an example "how a Christian may die;"—I think, cannot well be considered as an intruder upon our thoughts; and, though frequently repeated, ought in reality to be considered only as another and another way-mark in succession, to guide us on in the same path to the same glory.—One peculiarity, indeed, your readers will not fail to observe in this narration, which indicates the rank of life to which the person spoken of belonged. That he was a *servant*, appears clearly from an accidental mention of his master: whilst, at the same time, nothing is more striking than the general and undeviating *dignity of character* displayed in the last moments of this faithful Christian. And this is a remark I rejoice to make in honour of our common Christianity. To a heathen poet, death could appear in no other light than as betraying the littleness of man:

"Mors sola fatetur
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula."

and in his view of it, this king of terrors reduced even a Hannibal to the rank of a mere corpse and a shroud. It remained for Christianity to reverse the picture, and make death a stage of elevation; a scene, as it were, in which the believer is exhibited as of a size and figure proportioned to his hopes; and though selected, perhaps, from the very humblest rank, is made to sit "amongst princes, even the princes of his people." I see here an illustration of that true equality which our religion teaches us to place between man and man—an equality not consisting in a confusion of ranks, or a cool contempt of every thing *locally* above ourselves, but that which has respect to one common "Master who is in heaven, and with whom there is no respect of persons;" which raises what is low and ennobles what is base; which consists in an union of interest, a sameness of hope, and mutual sympathy of feeling; which even in life teaches

the poor to look without envy upon the accidental advantages of the rich, and the rich to "condescend" without stooping, "to men of low estate;" but which, more than all, in death reduces both precisely to the same level, and determines their eternal lot by one common standard of admeasurement; viz. their progress in the attainments of holiness.

I had intended to have drawn your readers' attention to the *catholic* spirit so interestingly displayed by this genuine and unaffected son of the church in his last moments—moments, even those, refreshed by the solemn accents of a primitive "*form of devotion*:" but I feel this would be at once reflecting upon their own discernment, and trespassing too long upon your time; and I therefore conclude with a prayer, that we may be found at length "followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises." I remain, &c. A. B.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A LAYMAN; LL.; CIVIS; J. L.; C. W.; A CURATE; T. R. BROMFIELD; COHEN; J—D.; S. M. C.; AMICUS VERITATIS; EZEKIEL FITWELL; N. S.; have been received, and are under consideration.

Mr. YATES's interesting communication respecting the "Indian roll of the Pentateuch" came too late to be inserted in this number: it will appear in our next.

The papers of PHILO and S. P. will appear.

To FREDERICK we should be disposed to recommend Scott's Bible; and if he had the means of enlarging the list of his commentators, he might add to it Doddridge, Henry, and Pole.—With respect to the import of the term "regenerated," in the baptismal service for infants, we refer him to our review of Mr. Spry's pamphlet in our number for December last.—For an answer to his question respecting the funeral service, he may consult the former volumes of our work; viz. Vol. i. pp. 159, 297, 500, and 771; and Vol. ii. pp. 78, 279, 459, and 787.

We cannot help thinking LAECUS somewhat hypercritical. He might with equal propriety object to the translation of Isaiah, and the notes upon it by Lowth, or to the prelections of the same learned prelate.

The two papers which have reached us on the subject of Infant Baptism contain so much of gratuitous reasoning and conjecture, and so little of fact and evidence, that we shrink from their insertion, as leading us into a mere war of words. Besides, with Dr. Wall on one side, and Dr. Gill on the other, there seems to be but little call for us to dive into the depths of this controversy. The only question which has really been mooted in our pages is confined to a narrow compass. It has been asserted, it seems, in some periodical publication (what publication it is, we know not; for all parties seem afraid to name it), that the *ONLY men in the early ages of Christianity, whose character or talents had brought their names to our knowledge, HAD ENTERED THEIR PROTEST against infant baptism; and that Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, Cyril, Justin, Athanasius, Hilary, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Ambrose, Arnobius, Jerom, Ephraim Syrus, and Epiphanius, were advocates of adult baptism, AS OPPOSED to infant baptism.* These assertions have been formally denied, and proof has been required. The proof we are ready to admit, and nothing more is necessary, for the defenders of the publication, than to produce it. In that case the comment may be spared. All that it will be necessary to state at present is, that the correspondent for whom this note is intended has, in opposition to J. G., affirmed that the error of Tertullian was a belief of the *guiltlessness* of infants, and not a belief that "full remission of sins was the sure effect of Baptism;" that the expression attributed to Origen by Rufinus, respecting the tradition of the church, is an interpolation, even by the admission of Dr. Wall; that the genuineness of Cyprian's Epistle to Fidus is disputed by the learned; and that, even if genuine, it does not prove that infant baptism did not begin to be practised in the third century.